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IF THE ADMINISTRATION desires to put an end to Henry Ford's anti-social and obstructive individualism, his ruthless labor policies long masked by fictitious publicity, it should not and need not depart from the path of legality. As it is, the campaign against Ford appears like a clear-cut abuse of authority. Nothing either in the recovery act or in the executive order of August 10 regulating the purchase of government supplies ought to be construed as sanctioning the Administration's decision to refuse to accept bids from the Ford Company simply because Ford has not signed a statement saying he will comply with the automobile code. On the contrary, the order of August 10, upon which the decision is apparently based, far from compelling a government contractor to make a public profession of faith in the NRA, merely requires that he "shall comply with all provisions of the applicable approved code of fair competition for the trade or industry or subdivision thereof concerned, or if there be no approved code of fair competition for the trade or industry or subdivision thereof concerned, then the provisions of the President's reemployment agreement promulgated under authority of Section 4a of the foregoing act, or any amendment thereof, without regard to whether the contractor is himself a party to such code or agreement." Has the NRA or the White House definite proof that Henry Ford is not complying with the provisions of the automobile code? If so, why has not the Administration taken legal action against him as required by the recovery act? If the Administration has no such proof, then certainly it is violating both the spirit and the letter of the President's order.

THE NATION is not seeking to defend Ford's policies or his attitude toward the NRA. It is interested only in the principle involved, and that principle concerns the use to which the Roosevelt Administration puts its authority under the recovery act. If this authority, greater than any President has had before, is abused in the case of Ford, why may it not be abused in situations where other individuals or groups are concerned? Why may it not, for example, be turned against the working class if the workers, accidentally or otherwise, incur the displeasure of a high-placed official in the NRA, as seems to have happened in regard to Ford? That the Administration is deliberately going out of its way to hurt Ford is an open secret in Washington. For example, J. F. Essary, Baltimore *Sun* correspondent, reports that the loss of business to the Ford Company as a result of the government boycott "might be serious," and adds that "Administration officials hope that it will be serious. They make no secret of the fact, or of their purpose to punish the motor magnate." Does one need to emphasize the danger that lies in this attitude? It is high time the Administration learned to respect the law of which it is itself the author, if it would have others obey that law.

THE ADMINISTRATION has changed its gold policy again, but the present policy is hardly an improvement over that of the week before. As *The Nation* pointed out in its comment of last week, to buy newly mined American gold above the world-market price could have no direct effect on the international quotation of the dollar; its only direct effect is to pay a gratuitous subsidy to American gold producers. It required only a few days to show the truth of this; the paper dollar rose even on days on which the price of domestic gold was advanced. But if the old policy was merely ineffective, the new policy is highly dangerous. Directly, it is true, it is unlikely to have a very pronounced result. For the United States government to buy $100,000,000 worth of gold from the London market could have no more immediate effect in reducing the value of the dollar than for the government or private traders to import an extra $100,000,000 worth of rubber or linen or any other commodity. The United States government has, of course, not the slightest *need* for this gold. We already have not only the lion's share of the world's gold but a far greater amount than we have ever held in the history of the Federal Reserve System, and we are not, as we were until a few months ago, called upon to pay out any given amount of it that might be demanded. When our government purchases gold abroad, international speculators may cooperate with it by selling dollars on the assumption that we expect to devaluate further; but those speculators may also buy dollars, and so op-

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pose the government, on the assumption that the acquisition of more gold strengthens the American dollar's position. The main result the Administration hopes for could be achieved much more easily by a simple official announcement by our government of the level at which it intended to devaluate and of the time when it was prepared to do so. Meanwhile our present policy is certain to give concern if not alarm to the British and French, leading to possible retaliatory measures and a competition in international debasement that could only end in disaster for all concerned.

TWO-THIRDS of 1,139 daily newspapers which were asked if they favored immediate recognition of Soviet Russia replied in the affirmative. The question was put by the Committee on Russian-American Relations of the American Foundation, and it defined "recognition" to mean the "immediate establishment of diplomatic relations, with agreement to enter upon subsequent negotiations for the adjustment of all outstanding claims, and other matters now in dispute." The answers included 718 newspapers which said they favored recognition on these terms, 306 which opposed it, and 29 which favored it with qualifications. The opposition, which was not confined to any section of the country but spread pretty generally north, east, south, and west, offered in general the time-honored objections: Russia must pay its debts first, must guarantee to prevent Communist propaganda in the United States, must recognize the right of private property, and so on. A few which objected did so on the ground that Soviet Russia did not believe in God, a few thought that the trade accruing to this country after recognition would not be worth the possible danger involved, one or two pointed out that British recognition of Russia had been ill advised. The Gallup (New Mexico) *Independent* was opposed to recognition and said: "Our local situation with an unauthorized strike influences our stand." The "sanctity of the family" was mentioned only once—by the Bristol (Connecticut) *Press*. No mention at all was made of the nationalization of women! The Logansport (Indiana) *Press* remarked sarcastically in voting in the negative: "Two Soviet governments should not come in conflict—the commissars might quarrel." The Corvallis (Oregon) *Gazette-Times* said: "We have become so radical here now that it is doubtful if Russia would recognize us."

THE DISARMAMENT CRISIS has disappeared temporarily from the front pages of the newspapers. But the crisis itself remains as lively and menacing as ever. For the moment, at least, the statesmen have retired in favor of the generals and admirals, the munitions makers and chemists. In England the munitions plants have taken on new life. Indeed, this industry is reported to be the busiest in Great Britain today. The great French munitions works have also increased their activity, with much profit incidentally to the Schneider-Creusot interests, which have again cut wages without at the same time reducing prices. The Belgian Cabinet has approved a plan to increase the funds being spent on the frontier defenses. The Swiss National Council has voted an emergency appropriation for the purchase of munitions and other military equipment. Similar measures are being discussed by the Polish and Czecho-Slovakian governments. Austria has, with the permission of the Allies, enlarged its army by 8,000 men. Even little Denmark, which a few months ago was voluntarily disarming itself, is considering reinforcing its southern defenses. Prime Minister Stauning announced that this line would be "defended to the limit." Japan and Russia have likewise been busy in the Far East. Australia and New Zealand have agreed upon a common defense plan, and the former has measurably increased its military budget. The Union of South Africa has suddenly decided to strengthen its military establishment, especially its air force. And here in the United States not only has the Administration rejected out of hand the British plea that the naval building race be halted before it is too late, but an aggressive Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Henry L. Roosevelt, has met the anxieties arising from the Geneva rupture with the statement that the Navy Department is "moving with *war-time speed* to start actual construction on new vessels."

MEANWHILE the scientists and propagandists have also been busy. British newsreels are being used to advocate rearmament. Speeches by the admirals and by such militarists as Lord Lloyd are faithfully reproduced for movie audiences, the newsreel editors explaining that "naval expansion is very much in the news, which it is our business to reflect." The same situation obtains in other countries. In Denmark and elsewhere gas masks are being placed on public sale. However humane this distribution may appear from the standpoint of the defense of noncombatants, the exhibition and sale of these masks is essentially a subtle form of war propaganda. The public mind is thus kept in a constant state of agitation and alarm. Among recent developments in the scientific field may be included the construction by the British of an airplane especially made to destroy submarines. It carries a quick-firing gun of secret design. The British have also developed a new type of 16-inch shell for their dreadnaughts which will pierce 16-inch armor even when striking at angles of 15, 20, or as high as 30 degrees, and explode with devastating effect in the interior of an enemy ship. Louis B. Wilson of the University of Minnesota has announced the perfection of a new army rifle with "a muzzle velocity of 5,000 feet a second as against the present velocity of 2,700 feet. . . . Bullets fired from this gun will shock and destroy three times as much tissue as the old-style bullets."

FORTUNATELY there is some encouraging news on the anti-war side. In addition to the decision of British labor in favor of a general strike in the event of another war, comes word of a by-election at Fulham at the end of October which had the astonishing result of returning a Laborite to Parliament by a majority of 5,000 in a district which had returned only Conservatives for a generation and had elected its last member by a Conservative majority of 15,000. A New York *Times* correspondent cables that "it was as if Vermont had gone Democratic." Now the significance of this election is that it was fought squarely on the issue of peace and war. The Conservative speakers, among them a member of the government, demanded a big navy, a larger army, an increased air force. The Laborites, headed by George Lansbury, took the extreme pacifist point of view—and carried the election in what was supposed to be a hopelessly Conservative and reactionary district. Obviously, if the government has to face many more such disasters it will have to meet an increasing demand for a general election. More

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light will be thrown on the situation by the next election, to be held on the day that Parliament reconvenes in November. In that the Labor candidate is a Quaker, who proclaims himself a pacifist and is making his campaign also on the question of peace and war. Here Sir John Simon has intervened, with such results as we shall see. In sixteen of these by-elections, declares the dispatch from which we have quoted above, there has been a decline of the Conservative vote on an average of 10,000 votes to the district. If that does not indicate that the British electorate is beginning to repent of having seated the coalition government, what could?

DISCLOSURE that the Machado administration was graft-ridden and hand in glove with American bankers for mutual benefit can scarcely be described as news. Yet revelation of the details before the Senate Banking and Currency subcommittee gives them authenticity. The Chase National Bank employed Machado's son-in-law at a high salary, although, in the words of one vice-president, "from any business standpoint" he was "perfectly useless," having "neither any ability for banking nor . . . the slightest ability in negotiating." The Chase hired him because "if we did not pay him a salary the President would have to give him an allowance." Moreover, the Chase paid this worthless son-in-law thousands of dollars to buy publicity in the Cuban newspapers favorable to one of its loans. Some acts of Chase officials apparently will not stand daylight. Parts of their correspondence were withheld from the record by Ferdinand Pecora, counsel for the committee, at the request of Winthrop W. Aldrich, president of the Chase Bank, "to prevent possible acts of violence in Cuba." Certainly such performances should no longer startle the public. We can find analogies much closer to home in our own larger city governments. What lends the Cuban exhibits their peculiar interest at this time is the unique relationship of the Cuban republic to ours under the obligations which a generation ago our government forced the Cubans to intrust to us by the Platt Amendment.

THE SECOND ARTICLE of the Platt Amendment—embodied in the permanent treaty between the two countries—restrains the Cuban government from contracting debts beyond its ordinary revenues and by implication fixes on our government responsibility for the execution of those provisions. They were flagrantly violated by Machado. But what is more important, they were violated with the knowledge of the responsible officials in our State Department. While this fiscal obligation was being breached (to the detriment of investors at home), our other, better-known trust under the Platt Amendment, "the maintenance of a government adequate for the protection of life, property, and individual liberty," was likewise betrayed. Wholesale murder, arbitrary imprisonment, and ruthless suppression were integral parts of the Machado system of control. One vice-president of the Chase, writing with bland cynicism to another, cited as evidence of Machado's complete domination the dictator's assertion that "in the last Congress there were one or two dissenting voices," but in the next Congress there would not be one dissenting voice, adding: "I suppose the two dissenting voices are already in jail." To line his pockets and those of his relatives and associates, and to "meet payments" to the bankers, the President was "even starving government employees." Here we have the fruits of the Platt Amendment. Is it not time that the United States government made belated amends for this betrayal under its guardianship of both the American good name and of the Cuban people by pledging the early abolition of the permanent treaty? Under our system of government the American people can devise measures to hold their buccaneers in check. But the Cubans, held in vassalage by the Platt Amendment, have been denied, as the bankers themselves boasted, "the chance of revolution." Political revolution has come at last, but Washington has not yet seen fit to recognize the revolutionary government which has functioned for eight weeks.

AS A SUPPLEMENT to the general code for retailers, the President included a special code for drugstores which contains provisions regarding hours that the Pharmacists' Union of Greater New York has declared unacceptable. Stores open for business between eighty and ninety hours a week are permitted a forty-eight-hour working week; stores open more than ninety hours a week are permitted to work their employees fifty-six hours. According to the Pharmacists' Union, the average drugstore is open sixteen hours a day, seven days a week, or 112 hours a week. All help, therefore, would be permitted to work fifty-six hours—with the exception of registered pharmacists, juniors, and apprentices, who come under the head of professional employees and are permitted to work 10 per cent more than that, and more in cases of emergency. This would mean that all persons classified as professional employees might work at least sixty-two hours a week. The union declares that the chain drugstores are urging their non-professional help to become professional. This is done in New York simply by having the employee file an application for an apprentice's certificate, which costs $1. He then becomes a "professional." Since the minimum wage is $16, the same amount being the minimum wage for the registered pharmacist, the "professional" is therefore permitted to work sixty-two or more hours a week for the same wage paid the non-professional who works no more than fifty-six hours. The Pharmacists' Union will attempt to enforce a code of its own.

AT THIS WRITING, a week before the New York City election, it appears reasonably certain that a substantial majority of votes will be cast for LaGuardia. How large a proportion of these votes are counted, to what extent the historic Tammany practice of padding, repeating, and intimidating will be successfully pursued, depends on the effectiveness of the Fusion organization on Election Day. Despite the favorable prospect, the importance of having every last Fusion voter come to the polls cannot be too strongly emphasized if, in addition to electing La Guardia, the city is to give him the support in office necessary to substantial achievement. Outside of Manhattan, the same candidates for aldermen appear on both the O'Brien and McKee tickets—conclusive evidence, if evidence were needed, of the essential identity in character of these two Tammany factions. The *Literary Digest* poll, which on its past performances may be accepted as a fairly accurate prognostication, reveals LaGuardia as having slightly under one-half the total vote, a plurality ample to elect him but just insufficient to elect the Fusion aldermen—in four boroughs. A majority of Tammany aldermen can defeat charter revision. It is crucially important, therefore, to have every possible Fusion vote.

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How Shall We Meet Nazi Propaganda?

WHATEVER else may be said of Adolf Hitler, he is putting men of conscience and principle to their trumps. Pacifists, faced by the fact that if Hitler is let alone for five years he may burst out of Germany at the head of a far more dangerous army than that of 1914, are impelled to heart-searching to make sure that they still believe in their faith. And now comes the question of Nazi propaganda in the United States. For those who have fought ever since the beginning of the World War for the right of free speech there is no difficulty in saying that the Nazi adherents in the United States are as much entitled to free speech as are Socialists, Communists, atheists, and all the dissenting minorities who have been so rigidly suppressed in many sections of the United States. We heartily indorse Harry Weinberger and Morris L. Ernst in their appearance before Mayor O'Brien of New York City to assert the right of Nazi sympathizers to have their say, although it is true that Mayor O'Brien's decision related to a city-owned structure.

The issue is complicated by the fact that the chief Nazi agitators are aliens. Few people realize that under our laws, and generally those of other countries, an alien is entitled to every right so far as free speech is concerned that inures to a citizen of the country in which he is sojourning. It is of course an outrageous breach of good manners for an alien to criticize or attack the government of the country in which he is living, but unless he violates the law by inciting to violence or crime, he has a legal right to do so. We do not go into our neighbors' houses if we are decent people, and try to break up their families, or denounce them for their way of living if we do not like it. *The Nation* believes that the United States government would be justified if, after the expiration of Herr Spanknöbel's permission to reside in this country, it declined to grant him that courtesy any longer. But as long as he is here, under our laws and our Constitution he is as much entitled to make an ass of himself in public as are those misguided native-born citizens who wish to advocate for the United States a dictatorship like that of Hitler's.

This is one of the principles that cannot be breached. We either have free speech or we haven't. The test is whether our faith in our institutions is strong enough to enable us to resist fascist or Hitlerite or Communist propaganda. If we firmly believe in our American institutions and their democratic spirit, which is something very different from being loyal to any given administration or policy in Washington, we cannot be shaken in that faith by any other doctrine. We have got to match our system against any other system; we have got to have courage to meet any advocate of any other system on the platform; and if we cannot beat him with pure reason, then we must admit that he has something better than we have. If there are Americans who believe that we ought to live under a Hitler and be the merest pawns of a bloody-handed tyrant, let them say so from as many platforms as they please. There is not the slightest reason to fear that they will ever win over the bulk of Americans to their view, whether they take their pattern from Moscow or Rome or Berlin.

But someone will object that these Hitlerites do not play the game according to the rules. They gain their ends by fraud, deceit, trickery, and above all by violence. What happened in the United German Societies in New York, as reported to Mayor O'Brien by Victor Ridder of the *Staats-Zeitung,* is characteristic of the way Hitler has wreaked his will upon Germany. His followers here got hold of the meeting by a trick, used violence, created an uproar, literally threw the other people out, and made themselves masters of the organization. Once in a position like this the Nazis see to it through their strong-armed men, their gangsters in brown uniforms, that nobody on the outside plays the same trick on them. Calvin Hoover, who has written a most admirable book, "Germany Enters the Third Reich," the best book so far on the rise of Hitler, dwells upon this point. He says that an honest and decent man cannot make headway against such brutes as these who stop at nothing, and he writes with deep feeling of the dreadfulness of the terror against which, once Hitler had seized the power and obtained control of the police, no one could even make a protest. Should not democracy, it is asked, protect itself against attacks of this kind by any means possible? The German republic a few years ago took exactly this position of allowing the Hitlerites to have their say, with the result that the republic perished.

On its face that seems plausible and difficult to answer, but the truth is that the leaders of the German republic showed an astonishing weakness. Hitler was an alien. He was caught in 1923 with arms in his hands setting up a rebellion within a country which was granting him hospitality. Surely it was not serving democracy to allow this man, and Ludendorff and Göring and the others who participated in this rebellion, to go at large after spending a few months in a comfortable fortress. Here was an overt act against the state which would have thoroughly justified putting Hitler into a genuine prison and keeping him there, banishing Ludendorff for life, and putting Göring in a safe place from which he could not get out. It was incredible weakness to take any other course when no issue of free speech was involved. Any man who violates the laws of his country or a foreign country does so at his own risk, whether his cause be right or wrong. John Brown had a good cause but adopted the wrong means, and when he lost he did not plead for mercy. He accepted his fate and stood upon the scaffold without a tremor until he paid the price.

We must not confuse weakness in administration of the laws with the principle of free speech. The historic American doctrine holds. The Jews who protested against Mayor O'Brien's action and stated that they did so in the interest of the Jews themselves, since if the Nazis were suppressed there would be a precedent established, were on solid ground. Let New York suppress the Nazis, and other cities will think they have the right to suppress Socialists, or Communists, or farmers who strike with the holiday associations, or anyone else whose views or beliefs the police may not like. Unquestionably the situation demands that we continue to uphold the finest American traditions of free speech and liberty of assembly at all times, no matter what the consequences.

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Salary Grabbers

IN asking 2,000 of the largest corporations in the country for information in regard to the payments made to their executives the Federal Trade Commission deserves the widest support of public opinion. Recent revelations of extravagant salaries and bonuses paid to high officials of banks and various other companies even in depression times—during a period when low-paid employees were suffering wage cuts and stockholders were often getting little or nothing—are a scandal which warrants a complete overhauling of the system by which big businesses are frequently exploited and sometimes ruined by little groups of insiders for their own enrichment.

The public has learned lately that for the last five and a half years that Albert H. Wiggin was connected with the Chase National Bank—during part of which time it was losing money—he drew $1,092,000 in salary and $275,000 in bonuses. The record of Charles E. Mitchell, until recently chairman of the board of the National City Bank, is even more shocking. Apart from salary he got $3,500,000 in bonuses for the three years 1927-29. The bonus system in business has become little better than a racket. On the witness stand Mr. Wiggin amiably admitted that his associates always suggested the additional compensation he was to receive. "And I helped to fix theirs," he added.

"You helped to fix theirs, and they helped to fix yours?" suggested Ferdinand Pecora, the examining counsel.

"Yes, we all sat together," said Mr. Wiggin.

The big insurance companies have been no better than the big banks. *The Nation* of April 26, last, printed figures showing that in the black year of 1932 the presidents of five large insurance companies drew annual salaries of from $100,000 to $200,000 apiece and four of them had had increases of $25,000 since 1929. Nor is there reason to suppose that industrial corporations have acted better than banks and insurance companies. Financial experts know that many companies in recent years have been conducted without any intention of paying dividends to their investors. The big stockholders have all assigned offices to themselves and have absorbed the profits in salaries and bonuses. A remarkable chapter in American finance has been revealed in the bankruptcy hearings of the Paramount-Publix Corporation. In the year 1929 Adolph Zukor and Jesse L. Lasky each received $130,000 in salary and $757,500 in bonuses. In 1930, the first year of the depression, the same salaries were continued and each man got $228,614 in bonuses. In 1931 the salaries were "reduced" to $112,616, and $1,000 apiece was paid to Messrs. Zukor and Lasky "for relinquishing any other claims." Even in 1932, with the company already practically bankrupt, Mr. Zukor drew $96,031 in salary. Three other executives fared almost as well as Messrs. Zukor and Lasky. The high salaries paid to movie stars is an old scandal, but they are expenses presumably offset by receipts and not on the same footing as the money which went to Paramount-Publix executives. This money came out of profits which ought to have been set aside as reserves or distributed to stockholders. The counsel for some of the latter has correctly characterized the proceedings as a "looting of the company's funds and of the stockholders' property." Probably there are many similar cases.

The exorbitant salaries of executives were a throttling tax on American industry even in the days of so-called prosperity. Since then, with low-paid workers dismissed by the thousands or put on starvation wages, and bond-holders and stockholders cheated of their expected returns, these salaries are a major scandal. *The Nation* recently said that there ought to be no cuts in government salaries of less than $10,000 a year until all higher salaries had been reduced to that amount. In the city of Baltimore, a fairly well-administered municipality, not a single official receives as much as $10,000. That sum might well be the limit for the executives who so ably mismanage American business.

The Retail Code

NOT because it has been so hotly debated nor because it concerns a million or more retail organizations, but because it establishes the first direct contact between the NRA and the buying public, the recently published retail code should command the interest of every consumer. It is all the more deplorable, therefore, that the chief criticism of it must be that it is ambiguous, in some places to the point of being completely without meaning. General Johnson, indeed, must have recognized this, for he accompanied the code with a statement which supplements several of the vaguest sections and succeeds in clarifying them considerably. The code, however, and not General Johnson's helpful statement, becomes the law of the land, and unless his explanation can be regularly and officially adduced for the purposes of interpretation, the retailers may find themselves entirely at sea.

The sections in the code which have been most eagerly awaited have been those which might deal with price-fixing, either for a maximum or a minimum price, and those dealing with "unfair practices" in competition. For the former it may be said that there is nothing in the code which may be construed as price-fixing in any way. There is, it is true, a limitation upon price increases which forbids a price advance greater than is made necessary by the increased costs incidental to the operation of the NRA, but this is so vague as to be almost valueless. Various expedients for the limitation of price advances have been suggested, the most logical, perhaps, being a heavy tax on the profits of all goods sold at more than 30 per cent above cost. No such limitations appear in the code. Nor is there, generally speaking, a minimum price level established. Under the section dealing with the much-discussed "loss leader" clause, appears a paragraph that General Johnson interprets as meaning that no merchandise may be sold at less than "its invoice cost plus at least a portion of the wages paid to employees in the stores." The article in question, however, says nothing of the kind. It defines "loss leaders" as merchandise "often sold below cost to the merchant for the purpose of attracting trade," and it deems such selling "unfair practice." It even contains several comments, surprisingly editorial in tone, severely condemning such practice. It declares that "the selling price of articles to the consumer *should* include an allowance for actual wages of store labor." What else it should include, or what may be the significance of "should" instead of "must"

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is not made clear. General Johnson's explanation is sorely needed, but no one can say just how official it is.

The other point, discussed at length under the head of "unfair practices" before the code was made public, was the question of advertising methods—in brief, fraudulent advertising. First, the code flatly declares that no retailer shall use advertising of any sort which is inaccurate or misleading or intended to deceive. This seems clear as far as it goes. Then, "no retailer shall use advertising which inaccurately lays claim to a policy or continuing practice of generally underselling competitors." The word "inaccurately," which did not appear in the controversy before the code was finally promulgated, sticks out like a sore thumb. Who shall determine what it means, unless it be agreed from the outset that such claims are always unfounded? The offenders, with millions of dollars worth of business annually to their credit, will probably make no such agreement without a struggle. This section, more than any other, indeed, raises the whole question of the enforceability of the code. Properly to weigh the word "inaccurately" in the section in question would mean to review the entire volume of business of a given establishment in all its branches. Obviously no enforcement is possible except by constant watchfulness on the part of one establishment, or a series of establishments not notorious offenders in this particular, over any other which may in the past have been an offender. The resulting private trade war might be as disastrous in the long run as the unfortunate competitive practices which the code seeks to eliminate.

In the matter of hours and wages one clause, at least, is worth noting. Establishments may elect to place themselves under one of three programs for hours, both hours of keeping the store open and of employment, the range being from a minimum of fifty-two hours for keeping the store open, with an accompanying forty-hour week for employees, to a maximum opening of sixty-three hours, with a forty-eight-hour working week. The difference in wages to the employee, however, between the forty and the forty-eight hour week is exactly one dollar! For the forty-hour week, in cities with a population of 500,000 or more, the minimum wage is $14; for the forty-eight-hour week the minimum wage is $15. In the metropolitan areas, where the tendency for many years has been toward shorter hours, and where the overhead for lighting and general service would far outdistance the cost of the extra dollar per week for employees, it is unlikely that advantage will be taken of this cheap means of increasing the employee's working time. But in the small stores, even exempting, as the code does, the establishments with fewer than five employees, it is altogether possible that labor will find itself working an extra eight hours a week for an extra dollar in pay.

General Johnson has appointed a Retail Trade Authority which will begin at once the herculean task of administration. It will have plenty of work to do, as will the local boards of complaint that are to be arranged for also. Between now and February 1, when reports of the workings of the code will be gone over and interpreted, it may be that the public will no longer be mulcted and that it will buy more merchandise. But if this happens it will not be so much a result of the retail code as of the general docility and law-abidingness of human nature. If retailers believe that they must behave and if the public is convinced that it must buy, what a pleasant world it will be!

Keeping the Movies Pure

SOMEWHERE in "Don Juan" Byron describes the gratitude which he felt when a boy for those editors of classical texts who eliminated the naughtier passages. This was not, he hastens to add, because he was anxious to be protected, but because the scrupulous editors always collected the deleted lines in a convenient appendix to which he could immediately turn—thus saving himself the trouble of reading the decent parts at all.

For movie-goers the National Council on Freedom from Censorship has performed a similar service by publishing in a ninety-eight-page pamphlet the complete text of all the eliminations ordered by the New York Board of Censors for the fifteen months' period ending March, 1933. The material is arranged in alphabetical order according to the title of the mutilated film, and cinema enthusiasts may thus conveniently find just what they missed in any particular "feature." Others may imitate Byron, save themselves the trouble of going to the movies at all, and luxuriate in a choice collection of more or less indecent bits of dialogue. As for us, we are particularly taken by an order issued in connection with a film called "Cock of the Air," which reads: "Eliminate views of Roger sensually contemplating bed." That is something we should like to have seen. We should, indeed, like to know just how it is done. A man who can ogle a bed must be talented beyond the ordinary.

For more serious students the pamphlet also contains a statistical study of the censors' activity. From this it appears that something like 38 per cent of all the material in "feature" films is eliminated, and that 44 per cent of the eliminations have to do with sex, 29 per cent with violence, 16 per cent with crime, 5 per cent with government, 3 per cent with religion, and the rest with miscellaneous topics. From an examination of the specific eliminations it further appears that most of those involving sex are merely silly, eccentric, and sporadic deletions which have no effect whatever upon the general atmosphere of the film, but that many of those which come nominally under the head of scenes dealing with crime, violence, government, or religion represent unmistakable attempts to control opinion by censoring any speech or action which tends to suggest that public officials cooperate with law-breakers, that prisoners are inhumanly treated, or that the capitalist organization of industry may not be the best one possible for society.

It must be confessed, however, that the general impression produced by a reading of the record of the censors' activity is not of something particularly sinister but of an elaborate, solemn, and organized silliness. Glancing through the pamphlet one comes to the conclusion that the State Board of Censors exists primarily for the purpose of preventing the movie-makers from presenting three things which they are tirelessly determined to present: (a) infants so displayed that the sex is evident, (b) gentlemen who rest their hands upon the posteriors of their lady friends, and (c) incompleted phrases which end when the speaker silently forms his lips in the position necessary for uttering the sportsman's name for a female dog. We do not know how much the activities of the Board of Censors cost the State of New York, but whatever the sum, it is obviously too much.

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Issues and Men

John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Does a Fine Job

JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER, JR., has rendered a public service of great value in sponsoring the book called "Toward Liquor Control," by Raymond B. Fosdick and Albert L. Scott, just published by Harper and Brothers, and in supplying the means which made possible the elaborate inquiry upon which the book is based. It is a singular thing that in a nation of 122,000,000 people, with no fewer than fifty separate governments, it should have been left to Mr. Rockefeller's public spirit and generosity to bring together the latest material concerning the various methods of dispensing liquors, drawn not only from American but also from European experience. We have done away with prohibition, or will have a few days after this article appears, and never was a country so utterly unprepared for the next step. One would think that every governmental authority would be profoundly concerned with the situation which will exist the day that prohibition is repealed, but not even the President has moved to deal with it. I believe that a committee of bureau heads has been appointed in Washington, but certainly no important body has been convened to discuss the whole question and outline a policy for the federal government. True, in some States—Connecticut, Delaware, Michigan, and Massachusetts, for example—there are commissions at work taking testimony and calling witnesses, but only one of these commissions has as yet reported definitely. The only thing that stands out clearly is that none is cooperating with any other. In brief, we are headed for chaos.

Hence Mr. Rockefeller's contribution to the subject is of enormous importance. At least it gives the basis for discussion, for it is an authoritative survey of all governmental methods of dealing with liquor. Nobody should be allowed to discuss the problem hereafter unless he has perused this volume, which has wisely been kept in a brief compass and is in no respect to be regarded as a tract. Some of our universities, even in these hard times, might have thought of doing this job, and certainly there are organizations of all kinds which could have financed and sponsored such an undertaking. But it was left to Mr. Rockefeller to keep us from going into the new experiment without any ready-at-hand textbook of the problem. To me it seems one of the finest services that have been rendered to the United States by a private individual in years, and I am the more happy to pay this tribute to Mr. Rockefeller's statesmanship because I have at times had to criticize him severely in connection with the labor policies of some of his companies.

Think what the magnitude of the liquor problem is. We not only have the forty-eight separate States, the Territories, the District of Columbia, and the outlying possessions to consider; we are face to face with the fact that more than half the States will be technically dry after the federal Constitution is altered by the abolition of the Eighteenth Amendment. Fourteen of our States will have to amend their own constitutions before they can be legally wet, and that is not an easy process. Five States only have changed their constitutions since January 1, 1932, while five more have repealed their prohibition statutes, and eight others are reported to be engaged in the latter undertaking. In view of the unanimous character of the voting so far I do not suppose that we shall see any State deciding to retain prohibition within its borders. But if a State like Kansas does try it, after voting to abolish national prohibition, it will have a much harder job to maintain itself as a dry oasis than it had prior to prohibition. The whole temper of the people has changed as a result of the prohibition experiment, and the wholesale connivance at illegal liquor selling, the wholesale corruption of public officials, the creation of a great army of bootleggers eager to continue in business, make it altogether unlikely that it will be possible to keep liquor out of any part of our American territory hereafter.

Obviously, under these circumstances, it would be the part of wisdom for the federal government and the States to work out a uniform system for the entire country, while resolving to drive out the gangster and the bootlegger and all his associates. The chances are that instead of any such wise move there will be any number of systems. Even in New York we have not yet come to any agreement. The legislature has simply turned over to a State board the problem of controlling the sale of liquor without giving any definite instructions as to how the control shall be exercised. From the point of view of the wets this is an extremely bad state of affairs, to say nothing of its threat to public morals. For if we drift back into the swinish condition of the old saloon we shall awake to the fact that the new conditions are just as bad, if not worse, than prohibition. Let no one underestimate the misery caused by the old system, the crimes that were the direct result of the saloons, and the dreadful economic waste. But, I hear it said, the old barroom is not coming back; everybody agrees on that. Yes? Just wander around New York and see the new bars with brass rails dispensing beer today, all ready for the New Deal in liquors.

Hence, I repeat, it is most encouraging to pick up the Rockefeller-inspired book and to find in it a statement of how the Canadian provinces handle the question, of how liquors are dispensed in European countries—among others, in Russia and England, both of which countries are making such splendid strides toward temperance. The book is, in fact, based on field investigations in ten foreign countries and in all the Canadian provinces. Interesting evidence of its fine, broad spirit is found in the following conclusions of Messrs. Fosdick and Scott: "No recommendations which we or anyone else could make carry with them an element of finality. . . . Our legal prescriptions and formulas must be living conceptions, capable of growing as we grow, for law is itself a social phenomenon and has no meaning apart from the uses and necessities from which it springs."

Oswald Garrison Villard

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The Right to Strike

By MAURITZ A. HALLGREN

Washington, October 30

NEARLY a million American workers have gone out on strike since the New Deal began. Probably as many as 100,000 men are out today, the total rising or falling as old disputes are adjusted and new strikes begin. The number of disputes brought to the attention of the Bureau of Labor Statistics has increased fourfold in the last six months and more than 500 per cent as compared with the average for 1932. While not all these controversies result in strikes or lockouts, a large majority of them do. Even those that are settled peaceably reflect the unrest which is spreading among American workers.

This unrest has taken a violent turn in many communities. It has resulted not only in the usual wholesale arrests of strikers and strike pickets but in the destruction of property: in the coal country mine tipples have been dynamited and bridges and miners' homes blown up, and in Philadelphia motor trucks laden with goods have been set afire. It has also led to numerous riots, from which both workers and police have come away with bruised heads and broken limbs, when no more serious injuries have been inflicted. Indeed, press dispatches show that some hundreds of strikers have been wounded and perhaps a dozen killed in clashes with factory guards, deputy sheriffs, and city police.

It is true that, measured either numerically or in terms of violence, the present wave of strikes seems mild and peaceful compared with similar series of outbreaks in the past. In 1919, for example, there were 2,665 labor disputes, strikes, and lockouts, involving no fewer than 4,160,348 workers—three times as many as had ever before or have since participated in such disputes in any one year. This period, which saw the rise of a militant revolutionary movement and also witnessed the notorious Palmer red raids, was doubtless the most turbulent in recent labor history.

The revolutionary fervor that gripped a section of the working class in 1919 is absent today, and there is no indication of a trend toward extreme violence on the part either of the workers or of the authorities. Yet it is well to remember that the present labor unrest is far from having run its course. And it must also be remembered that there is in the present situation a factor that did not exist in 1919 or in the seventies and eighties of the last century. In the past the workers had always to fight on their own. They had to contend not only with an antagonistic employing class and an apathetic public but with a government that was at least unsympathetic when it was not openly hostile. The attitude of the government has now been changed, or so we may presume from the language of the recovery act and the utterances of Administration officials. Under the New Deal the government is actively supporting the cause of the working class. At least many workers believe this, whether or not it is actually true. Whatever the ultimate effect of the apparent combination between government and labor may be, it is clear that it has introduced a new and uncertain factor. Hence it is difficult, if not quite impossible, to compare the present strike movement with similar movements in the past.

It is probable that the summer and autumn of 1933 would in any case have seen an outbreak of labor troubles. There were portents of a minor upturn in business even before Franklin Roosevelt took office. Such upturns have in the past invariably been accompanied by labor unrest, for it is when economic recovery begins and prices start to climb that the divergence between living costs and wage-income is brought into sharpest focus for the average workingman and his wife. But the number of strikes was undoubtedly increased by the brisk but basically unsound boom in industry that took place from May to August. Production indices soared almost to normal and retail prices started upward, but the employment index was left far behind and the pay-roll totals showed hardly any change at all. That this boom, largely the product of the government's currency policy, was an important factor in stirring up the workers cannot be questioned.

However, other and perhaps more important factors have been at work. For not all the strikes called to date have had higher wages or improved working conditions as their principal objectives. In fact, a majority of the strikes have been started with a view to compelling employers to recognize and deal with labor unions. There have been few strikes and few signs of unrest in the organized industries—for example, in the printing trades, among the railroad workers, and in the building trades. On the other hand, many controversies have arisen in open-shop industries, such as steel and automobiles, and in loosely integrated industries—bituminous mining and the clothing and needle trades, for instance—where internal conditions have been such as to make the organization of labor difficult. Labor unions have been active in these latter industries for many years, but in no case have they been wholly successful. On the contrary, the United Mine Workers, which even at the zenith of its power had been unable to penetrate the important Appalachian or Southern fields, was literally falling to pieces when the recovery act came to its rescue. In the clothing industry such organizations as the Amalgamated Clothing Workers did much better, but even these unions, alert and progressive as they were, had difficulty in keeping up with the shifting of sweatshops across State lines and with the other rapid changes so easily effected in an industry made up of small, mobile units.

It may be noted that most of the strike activity has been confined to industries where progressive or radical unions had been at work or where industrial unionism had gained a foothold. This has been true especially of the clothing and textile industries, in which the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the unions of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action, and the Communists have long been active; and also of the bituminous industry, in which the United Mine Workers, the largest industrial union in the country, seems once again to be fairly well established. It has been less true of the steel and automobile industries, which the craft unionists of the A. F. of L. appear to have marked out for themselves. Most of the recent steel strikes have been inspired or openly called by the Communists rather than by the A. F. of L.

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unions, while the few automobile strikes that have taken place have been more or less spontaneous. The A. F. of L. has been active in building up its membership, but it has been far behind the progressives and radicals both in its militancy and in its willingness to expand into new fields. There are numerous industries, not included in the list above, which are either entirely unorganized or at best inadequately organized, and in which there have been very few labor disputes. The absence of such controversies does not necessarily mean that the workers are satisfied with conditions in these industries, for the contrary is more likely to be the case; it suggests rather that union organizers have as yet made no serious attempt to enter these industries. Why the A. F. of L. has made no determined effort to organize a field which is practically virgin territory may perhaps be ascribed in part to its refusal to abandon the principle of craft unionism, and in part to the fact, as expressed by J. B. S. Hardman in *The Nation* of December 21, 1932, that for the federation leaders it would mean "going out of well-appointed offices into the field, jeopardizing accumulated resources, sometimes taking a chance with life itself."

To sum up, recognition by employers of established or new unions has been the chief objective of the strike movement as a whole. American labor is again in the midst of one of its periodic struggles to get itself organized. Whether it will be any more successful than it has been in the past remains to be seen. This time, in any event, it appears to have the support of the government. Section 7a of the recovery act, which President Roosevelt has called labor's "new charter of rights," frankly says to the workers in the unorganized industries: Go ahead and form your unions; the government guarantees that they will be protected and recognized. This guaranty is obviously worthless in fact unless it can be enforced, and the workers, facing a hostile employing class, have thus far found no way to enforce it except by resort to strikes.

One concrete result of the wave of strikes has been to arouse apprehensions concerning its effect on the Roosevelt recovery program. Already many voices have been raised to suggest or demand that the right to strike be suppressed in the interest of economic recovery. Ida M. Tarbell has denounced the strikes as antiquated and barbaric. The Paul Block newspapers recently published an editorial declaring that the "hundreds of strikes throughout the country are largely responsible for the retardment of business progress. . . . Business is ready to start upward, and no one, either employer or employee, should be allowed to stand in the way." Edward F. McGrady, Assistant Secretary of Labor and formerly chief Washington lobbyist for the A. F. of L., asserted that there is "no doubt that the public sentiment of the country is almost unanimously behind the President. Unnecessary strikes will turn that sentiment against organized labor." Leo Wolman, chairman of the Labor Advisory Board, contended that it is "unnecessary to call strikes to enforce" the labor provisions of the recovery law. "Labor," he said, "cannot afford to endanger the success of the NRA." Senator Wagner, chairman of the National Labor Board, has several times spoken in the same vein. General Hugh Johnson, head of the NRA, went so far in his speech before the A. F. of L. convention as to call the strike a form of "economic sabotage." He openly hinted at government control of the labor unions should the strike movement continue.

There can be no question that any cessation of effort on the part of the workers will impede the Roosevelt program. With this in mind the Administration is hastily setting up extensive machinery for the purpose of intervening in labor disputes. The National Labor Board has been formed in Washington, and this body is organizing district branches in various parts of the country. The use of such machinery is understandable enough in cases where the disputes or strikes are of the usual sort having to do with wages and working conditions. But a large majority of the strikes today are designed to obtain that recognition for labor organizations which the recovery act presumes to guarantee the workers. In other words, no mediation or arbitration is necessary to settle these disputes. All that the Roosevelt Administration need do is to enforce the law of which it is itself the author. Hence it is strange to find even the labor representatives in the Administration speaking in terms of arbitration when discussing the labor disputes that have arisen.

It is likely, however, that the erection of this elaborate mediation machinery is not entirely without meaning. Granted that it was sincerely devised with a view to helping labor, the fact remains that it can be turned against labor. One notes, for example, that the National Labor Board contains what the suspicious-minded might consider an anti-working-class majority. Four of the seven members of the board are employing-class representatives, and if a real clash between the economic interests of capital and labor is brought before the board, this factor may make itself felt, even though at the moment two or three of the employing-class members appear to be sympathetically inclined toward the interests of the workers. In addition, two of the three labor representatives on the board, William Green and John L. Lewis, are notorious reactionaries.

It is still a moot question whether the workers, feeling that there is now a friendly Administration in Washington and that their interests are adequately protected by the recovery act, will now sit back and let the government do their fighting for them, or will instead be encouraged by the Administration's support to redouble their own efforts out in the field. If they choose the former course, as many of them seem to have done, they will probably be doomed to disappointment. For General Johnson and other high Administration officials have repeatedly said that it is not a part of the government's task to help organize labor unions. That the workers will have to do for themselves. If, on the other hand, they choose the latter path, they will encounter other and no less serious obstacles. Employers in general seem determined not to extend recognition to the unions without a struggle. Therefore the workers are virtually compelled to fight, that is, to strike, to obtain such recognition. But with the economic crisis actually deepening, despite surface indications to the contrary, the Administration finds itself under increasing pressure to extend its control over all factors affecting its recovery program. One of the most important of these factors is obviously the right of the workers to withhold their labor in order to gain their own ends. If the strike movement continues to spread through the coming winter, we shall probably see the National Labor Board being used not only to settle wage disputes but also, though perhaps not openly, as a device for the suppression of the right to strike.

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Profitable Public Ownership

Ontario's Lesson for Muscle Shoals

By JUDSON KING

WHETHER it be sovietism, as former Attorney-General George W. Wickersham and like stewards of the old regime warn, or deliverance from extortion, as the people believe, we are in for a try at public ownership of electric-power plants and systems. It is therefore good business judgment to survey the field, look far into the future, and try to get a thorough understanding of the basic factors which will bring ultimate success to these experiments. This is true whether it is a question of small local plants or of gigantic superpower systems serving scores of cities, towns, and farm districts by a network of high-tension transmission lines from one or two great generating stations, as is contemplated in the Muscle Shoals, Boulder Dam, and St. Lawrence projects.

These giant power projects are essentially of the same type as the Ontario Hydroelectric system in Canada. While there are more than 2,000 municipal plants in this country, we have had no experience in operating a public *superpower* system. The only one in existence which has grown up under social and economic conditions similar to those to be found in the United States is the Ontario system. Manifestly, therefore, the policies and practices which have led to the success of the Ontario system should receive our careful study. If there be any question that the Hydro *is* a financial success, let the honest doubters consider the balance sheet of 1932, which reveals a total cash investment of $382,558,763, with total reserves of $122,770,103, with all sinking fund, interest, and other bills paid, and with bonds at par—this despite phenomenally low rates and no revenue from taxes. The engineer-manager of the Kitchener Commission informed me this summer that if he paid taxes as, for example, the telephone company does, it would add only 4/10 of 1 mill per kilowatt hour to his rates. Since he has sold current to householders for the past ten years at an average of a little over 1½ cents per kilowatt hour, it is evident that if he did pay taxes it would not bring the rates within long-distance-telephone hearing of our average domestic rate during that period of more than 6 cents. The Hydro has been and is a "self-liquidating" project despite the blue haze of misrepresentation regarding it which now covers the United States and deceives many of our citizens, especially business men and manufacturers.

In Ontario all generation and long-distance transmission are under the control of the Hydroelectric Power Commission of the province. Power is delivered by the commission to the cities at wholesale rates. The cities do the retailing, but under rates and regulations laid down by the commission, which acts as a regulatory body.

The enterprise began operations in October, 1910, with twelve cooperating municipalities served by the commission over high lines from Niagara Falls. Today there are 387 municipalities, large and small, and 172 farm units so served. Historically speaking, then, our governmental projects are at the same stage as the Hydro was in the period from 1903 to 1910, when the struggle for its establishment was at white heat. After this brief sketch of the background, let us examine the principles laid down by Sir Adam Beck, first chairman of the Provincial Power Commission, and his coworkers.

Sir Adam was a hard-headed business man who knew there was no sentimental magic in the words "public ownership" which would automatically bring genuine and lasting success. He held that the engineering and financial structure of a public project must be on as sound a basis as the promoters of any private enterprise could devise. Beck was a very J. Pierpont Morgan in industrial vision and executive capacity, but was afflicted with a passion for public service as distinguished from private gain. He saw far ahead and knew what cheap electricity in the homes and factories and on the farms of Ontario would mean.

On the other hand, he did not propose that the Hydroelectric system should be an eleemosynary institution. It was to be self-liquidating with a vengeance and in a fashion unknown to private power executives. No municipality, no farm district, no householder, and no manufacturer was to be subsidized. Each was to receive electric service "at cost," but each municipality and each class of consumers must pay the exact and total cost incurred in serving it. "Cost" was to include all depreciation, sinking-fund, interest, and operating charges, and was to be paid entirely from revenue collected from customers and not at all from taxes. From the beginning this enterprise has stood on its own feet and all that the provincial government or the government of any municipality has ever done has been to guarantee the bonds of the enterprise.

Note especially that from the beginning the members of the Hydro Commission set their faces like flint against the utility being used as a taxing agency. They said to the mayors and city councils: "Hydro will be independent financially and ask nothing from you. But its surplus revenues belong to the light and power consumers. We will not turn over these surpluses to make up deficits in your street-lighting, building, park, fire, or other departments, or to sustain charities. We will not encourage extravagance, waste, and mismanagement in other departments. You must put them on a self-sustaining basis, as we have put ourselves. We will not compel the power consumers to make up deficits caused by real-estate speculators holding land out of use and waiting for a rise in values, by other tax dodgers, or by an unsound system of taxation. This is the surest method of keeping us out of your political squabbles." That policy has never pleased Ontario politicians and to this day they are trying to break into Hydro's surpluses. If you hear of any rows now in progress in Ontario over the Hydro, know that this is one of the fundamental causes, not the question of validity of public ownership.

To put Hydro on such a business-like basis an efficient, uniform system of accounting and cost-finding was neces-

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sary. The inadequate, hocus-pocus methods of the private companies were at once discarded and a new system put in force, worked out by the most distinguished auditors and certified accountants of Ontario. Another principle laid down and hammered in until it has become almost a religion with the people of the province is that "Hydro must be kept out of politics." Of course no institution, public or private, can be removed from the sphere of government, and government belongs to the people, or should. But Beck did not propose to run his transmission lines to towns on the basis of political pull or award contracts as "pork" for heavy contributors to the funds of the Conservative Party, to which he belonged, or of any other party, nor did he propose to hire managers, engineers, or other technicians because they were recommended by political heavyweights. Of course the politicians tried their old game with Beck, but they were repulsed with a vengeance, and his reputation for ruthlessness no doubt arises from his action in this matter, as well as from the forthright fashion in which he dealt with financiers, newspapers, and private-utility magnates intent on scuttling his enterprise from within and without.

Another principle of the Hydro was and is dependable service. Therefore it had to have the best engineering and thoroughly sound construction. Hydro was to be built to last, and tawdry equipment is not consistent with long-range economy. Hence Hydro is today a model of technical engineering efficiency, admired and studied by engineers from all over the world.

There is, however, a charming story that when the plans for the great Chippewa Canal, eleven miles long around Niagara Falls, which serves the Queenston plant, were completed and construction was about to begin, certain private interests, determined to block Beck and public ownership, engaged a celebrated American hydraulic engineer to report on the soundness of these plans. After making his examination, this engineer appeared one day in Beck's office and told him that out of courtesy he wished to inform him in advance that he had found the plans unsound from an engineering point of view, and that the enterprise would end in financial failure. Beck replied: "I do not know you or your ability or who hired you to make this report, or what is really up your sleeve. I do know of the ability and integrity of my own engineers. Make your report and be damned! And now please retire from my office." It may be added that the report never appeared.

This illustrates another factor in Hydro's success. It had a leadership which fought and gave no quarter. I know personally and have talked with many of these old battlers. They tell me that they were aware from the start that the private-power men and the bankers would stop at nothing to ditch Hydro and cause it to fail; that they would burrow from within and put traitors at important posts, if possible; that no promise of cooperation or fair dealing would be kept. Hence they refused to enter into any cooperation or any commitments which would tie their hands. The public interest in the success of Hydro and the greed for gain of utility buccaneers could not be coordinated. The camel's nose has been kept out of the tent, and that is another huge factor in Hydro's success, because when the power camels cannot make huge profits on inflated securities in the utility business they get out and go into some other business.

Sir Adam and his coworkers knew that most municipal-ownership enterprises had been blocked at the start, sometimes for years, by taxpayers' lawsuits, brought at the secret instance of private utilities which had no hope of winning them but wished to delay and bedevil the public enterprise. Meanwhile the private utilities would go on making their profits, a small part of which would pay for the lawsuit. Sir Adam proposed to have none of this sort of racket, as did the legislature of Ontario. The act creating the commission and establishing its broad powers sets the Hydro free of such criminal interference with the public welfare. This is not to say that a man having a just cause can be denied his day in court. There have been a few cases, but very few, for the commission has played fair with the public and, indeed, with the private utilities. But there has been no wholesale flood of lawsuits frustrating the municipalities or the Hydro engineers and managers such as I anticipate will be launched in Alabama and Tennessee in the near future.

Last to be noted here, but not least, is long-range business foresight. The commission foresaw the tremendous demand for current which 2-cent electricity would bring about and the need of building to supply that demand. The commission has always planned five or ten years ahead. Its political and financial enemies have howled objections to these plans when announced, predicting that there was no market for such vast quantities of current, that the enterprise would fail and the province and municipalities be engulfed in debt. That sort of talk is heard even today in Ontario and is one of the arguments the power trust is using to frighten the people of the Muscle Shoals district from establishing their own distributing system and buying power wholesale from the Tennessee Valley Authority.

The fact is that the growth of load, stimulated by constantly falling rates, has been so phenomenal that until recently the commission has had difficulty in keeping pace with it. In 1910 the average Ontario householder, using current from private companies at the rate of 10 cents per kilowatt hour, was consuming only 20 kilowatt hours a month. Today, with current below 2 cents, the average amount used is more than 150 kilowatt hours a month as against the average of 50 in the United States. The commission is planning to meet a future demand which will be much larger than it is now in the homes as well as in industry. An increasing number of manufacturers from the United States are locating in Ontario to get these low power rates.

Limited space precludes the discussion of other factors. If we turn from the financial soundness of these principles to their social benefits the case becomes stronger still. The low income of the average American home forbids the use of enough electricity to drive out unnecessary drudgery unless current can be bought at less than 2 cents per kilowatt hour. Indeed, a Hydro engineer told me this summer that electricity must be sold at 1 cent or less fully to realize home needs. Such prices cannot be had if the public plants are to carry the general tax burden, in whole or in part. While the stories of "taxless towns" may be pleasing and valuable in demonstrating the enormous profits of the power business, the practice is unsound from both a social and a financial point of view. To repeat, power consumers should not be asked to shoulder the burdens of real-estate speculators and other tax dodgers.

[*This is the twelfth of a series of articles on electric power and the consumer.*]

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A German Student Speaks

By PETER LIEBERKNECHT

[*The author of this article, a young German twenty-five years old, was for two years a correspondent of the Anglo-American Newspaper Service in Geneva. Having returned to Germany to pursue his studies for a Ph.D. at the University of Munich, he was arrested in March for having recounted in a public cafe the mistreatment of a Jew, Uhlfelder, in Neuhauser Street, of which he was an eyewitness. After being imprisoned for four weeks, he was released without trial under police surveillance. However, by a clever stratagem he managed to cross the frontier into France and is now making a precarious living in Paris.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

HITLER is striving for the material and spiritual regeneration of Germany. I cannot speak with authority of the accomplishments of the Nazi revolution in other fields, but as a student I can testify that the intellectual life of Germany has been set back at least 150 years. As a student, I regret this; as a German, I am ashamed of it. To understand the facts it is necessary to understand the part played by German students in the Nazi movement and to analyze the social and psychological factors which have caused the student body to become the core of the revolution.

Of course the revolution cannot be held entirely responsible for the decline of the German universities, for it is evident that their position as centers of intellectual development has been waning for a decade. This decline, however, was brought emphatically to the attention of the whole world when students became the most active and extreme participants in the revolution of March, 1933. With full confidence in the loyalty of the student body, the storm-troop leaders saw to it that they were the first to be armed, and it was the students who committed those "intellectual" crimes which quite properly terrified the whole world. They showed themselves to be the most violent anti-Semites, expelling Jewish professors and sacking scientific institutions. It was they who searched for and brought to the bonfire the condemned books, and it is the perpetrators of these acts of terrorism whom Hitler himself has characterized as "the future leaders of the nation."

Before the war the monthly income of a German university student ranged between 100 and 300 marks. In 1932, according to the *Asta,* official publication of the students of the University of Munich, currency depreciation and the financial difficulties of all classes of the population had reduced the average monthly income to about 60 marks. Statements from other universities confirm this figure. Naturally, this lessened income affected very deeply the social position of the students, many of whom are the sons of old bourgeois families who lost their fortunes during the inflation, others of poorly paid functionaries or of former officers with small incomes and many children. It was part of the social code of these classes that at least the eldest son should attend a university; in order to live up to this social obligation on their reduced income, the young men were obliged to earn a good part of their living themselves by tutoring, house-to-house selling, and, during vacation, by working in factories. But along with the decline in income came the general scarcity of work of any kind.

Even more discouraging to the student than present misery, which might be only temporary, was the uncertainty of the future. With unemployment constantly increasing, thousands of lads who would ordinarily have gone from school directly into trade entered the universities simply to pass the time or to learn something which might be of future benefit. This condition was a further handicap to the genuine student who intended to make teaching or research his life work, as it crowded the field at the very time when the number of positions open to college graduates was decreasing. Another source of competition was the great number of girls who in normal times would have married, but, now, since they faced an uncertain future, entered the universities instead, with the idea of eventually being self-supporting. During the past ten years the number of girls in German universities has more than doubled. Because of all these factors, less than 40 per cent of the students who graduated could hope to find positions. The knowledge of this fact was not conducive to serious study. Having only a mild interest in their courses and caring little whether or not they passed their examinations, students let their attention drift to other fields of activity.

From another point of view it may be remarked that even under today's conditions of depression there is room in Germany for the employment of thousands of university graduates. For example, each doctor accredited by the Social Insurance Administration is obliged to attend from 50 to 100 cases daily; it may be assumed that the treatments are not always conscientious. Likewise, the number of public-school teachers has not been increased although, as in the universities, the number of students has greatly increased. Examples in many other professions could be cited.

Picture, then, thousands of young Germans of both sexes who normally would never embark on an intellectual career at loose ends in the universities, with no great interest in their studies, little hope of future employment, and plenty of time to listen to the vague but high-sounding phrases of a demagogue who tells them that once he is in power there will be an end to all their difficulties. Most important of all, he promises to reduce unemployment, particularly among the intellectuals. And how? Simply by expelling the Jews from all the positions they hold, and sending the girls back to the only duties for which, under the old imperial formula, they were fitted—"church, children, and cooking."

Such were the forces which in an incredibly short time transformed the Nazi movement from an expression of local discontent into a resistless tide of nationalism. But while it is the youth of Germany which has given Hitler his most effective support, it may be doubted if that support would have been so quickly and effectively won if there had not existed in the German universities not only a discontented, partially idle student body, but also an old-established and effective organization for uniting them in a common cause. As

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everyone knows, the Student "Corps" and the *Burschenschaften* owe their origin to the radical and revolutionary ideas of 1848 and 1849. As with many other old institutions the traditions of their origin were maintained, revered, and extolled, but in practice had fallen into disuse. After 1870 the corps became a center of militaristic and Junker ideals—ideals of exaggerated honor, which manifested itself in the slitting of a fellow-student's face in spite of a dead-letter law against dueling, and of synthetic bravery, which consisted, in true Rabelaisian fashion, of drinking immense quantities of beer.

These false standards, however, only increased the attractiveness of the corps as social organizations, so that their underlying spirit, apart from excesses, was not unlike that prevailing in American fraternities. The alumni, or *Alte Herren,* who occupied judicial positions were naturally loath to condemn a brother in the corps who might be brought before them for an offense against the dueling law; and if an undergraduate was seeking a position, what could be more natural than for him to apply, first of all, to an alumnus of his own corps? Thus there developed a paradoxical situation in which many students never had enough to eat, always had too much to drink, occupied themselves with the most senseless sports, and secured soft positions on graduating.

As the depression deepened, not even the most fraternally minded *Alter Herr* was able to do much better for one of his corps brothers than to find him a temporary job, such as tutoring his children for a week or two. So the students, who had already acquired the habit of depending upon older men well-placed financially, turned inevitably to the Brown Shirt organization. The fighting forces of Hitler, the S. A. and S. S., provided food and shelter and three marks a day for students, adventurous or otherwise, who could find no employment elsewhere, and those of superior capacity readily found remunerative administrative jobs in the Nazi Party. Thus, apart from the unthinking enthusiasm engendered in the youth of Germany by Hitler's rosy promises, a reason for thousands of students following Hitler was that his organizations enabled them to maintain a certain social position or at least to avoid falling into the proletariat.

Yet the reason why the students became the most fervent section of the Nazi Party remains to be explained. I have seen students treat Jews with the utmost ferocity without even attempting to understand what they were doing or why they should consider the Jews as enemies. Actually, this lack of understanding was a direct result of their social misery. Thinking of their hopeless position became unbearable. They came to want any change, and particularly a change which would put them under the orders of someone who would do their thinking for them. Never have Nietzsche's words, "There must still be chaos within," been more true of the inner life of the German people. For, directly contrary to what Hitler maintains, the Germans are not and never have been one race, one blood, one culture. Situated in the center of Europe, Germany has been overrun by migrating races and by invading armies. All have left traces of their blood among the German people. Until as late as the sixteenth century the northeastern part of Germany was populated exclusively by Slavs who were civilized and partly Germanized by German Catholic priests. However, the Germans of that region are not pure Slavs, though many have the same characteristics of thought as the Asiatic peoples of the immense plains of Russia. It is true that during the Middle Ages Germany was a part of the Holy Roman Empire and was, therefore, inevitably allied with Western civilization. Nevertheless, interior stability and national unity have never been achieved to the same extent as in France, Italy, and Spain, heirs of the Roman tradition. Germany, throughout history, has been the battleground of Eastern and Western culture, and this is why the world has suffered so often from a German instability which seems again about to become a menace to peace.

If the present generation tends to overlook this inherent instability of the German people, it is because after Bismarck established a de facto national unity in 1871, the ambitions of Kaiser Wilhelm II led him to dream that the German people had a mission similar to that of the English. Colonial development, naval building, and world adventure served for a time to unite the German people in a nationalism which during a period of forty years succeeded in calming the internal chaos. This nationalism reached its apotheosis in the World War. After that, since there was no longer a unifying purpose, chaos resumed its sway.

As for the students, they are content for the moment with the mission with which Hitler has provided them. Their intelligence, fostered by university training, makes them terrified of the chaos which they see about them. For centuries German professors, educated in the ideals of Western civilization, have struggled against this chaotic German spirit. They forced themselves to dominate it and to lead it along the path toward a noble end, but if at times they succeeded and, they themselves or their students, created world-renowned works of culture and technique, more often they failed and themselves fell exhausted from the struggle to think independently under a discipline which all but prevented individual thinking. It was inevitable that the spirit of unquestioning submission to discipline resulting from the World War should now lead these same professors and students to submit to the even more stringent discipline of the Nazis.

The *Deutsche Studentenschaft,* official organ of all matriculated German students, issued a manifesto on May 10 last which contains the following sentence: "We insist that the German university become the fortress of Germanism and the battlefield of German thought and power." The same manifesto demands the expulsion of all professors who are not in tune with the new orthodox spirit. Another sign of the new direction given to German learning is the obligatory institution of the new science invented by the Nazis called *Rassenkunde,* or racial science, which in the words of Achim Gerke, racial commissar of the Third Reich, is designed to reestablish the purity of the German race. It is not yet known whether the Nazis will go so far as to establish the fantastic institutions proposed by Dinter, founder of *Rassenkunde,* known as *Hegehöfe,* large breeding farms which will be stocked with twenty girls and three young men, all of absolutely unadulterated race.

Where are the German universities headed? It is impossible to foresee, but if they are to get back to their high level of 1914, new minds as great as Lessing, Kant, Leibnitz, and Hegel will be needed. It will be necessary to start all over again to build the road to intellectual freedom. The German intellectuals who have emigrated to foreign lands must enlist the help of the intelligentsia of the world to enable the German people to find themselves once more.

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Books I Have Never Read
A Symposium

[A few weeks ago the Drifter published a list of ten indispensable books which he had never read and suggested that it would be a good idea if literary editors and critics would consent to draw up such lists in place of the more usual "Ten Best Books." Many newspapers commented upon this suggestion and many readers wrote in to say that they felt much better themselves after reading this confession from a professional. We decided, therefore, to ask some of the best-known writers on literary subjects to admit their deficiencies, and we publish below some outstanding replies.— EDITORS THE NATION.]

CARL VAN DOREN

THESE are not the ten best books I have never read but the first ten that came into my mind when I was asked to think about the matter. Various authors: "The Bible"; Dante: "The Divine Comedy"; Ariosto: "Orlando Furioso"; Cervantes: "Don Quixote"; Spenser: "The Faerie Queene"; Goethe: "William Meister"; Carlyle: "The French Revolution"; Landor: "Imaginary Conversations"; Browning: "The Ring and the Book"; Nietzsche: "Thus Spake Zarathustra."

I cannot claim that I know nothing about them. Actually I have read a part—in some cases a large part—of each of the ten books, just as I have, at one time or another, looked into most of the great books of the world. But I have always been too busy, or too impatient, to read any book to the bitter end unless (1) I was being paid to do it, or (2) the book itself compelled me. Readers who for other reasons read more than that seem to me to be people who have nothing better to do.

HARRY HANSEN

The Drifter's comment on unread books makes me think that a list of books read and forgotten would be much more interesting. I remember attending a class in English sixteenth-century poetry with Shaw's "Plays: Pleasant and Unpleasant" under my arm; today I have forgotten the poetry, but I remember the plays vividly.

I don't think it really matters, but I have never read the Book of Revelation or Deuteronomy, the works of Erasmus, Fouqué's "Undine," Guizot's "History of Civilization in Europe," Henry Lea's "History of the Inquisition," James Bryce's "Holy Roman Empire," Grant's "Personal Memoirs," Livingston's "Missionary Travels in South Africa," or Samuel Butler's "Odyssey."

P.S. And I don't intend to.

BRANCH CABELL

Modesty forbids me to enter a symposium which in any way concerns the topic of reading. For I find that I no longer read, or care to read, anything. I appear to have reached, without being proffered any alternative save only the tranquilizing and dark ministrations of the funeral parlor, that stage in life when reading is not any more a diversion. My eyes tire very, very easily nowadays, even when perusing the most shocking sentiments; but, above all, I perceive that I have read as many books as I care to read, in any honest sense of that verb, by which I mean the deliberate assimilation of a book from its title-page to its colophon.

It follows that the Drifter's confession has caused me, in the first place, to look back with incredulous wonder on my former exploits, on my forced marches and prolonged sieges, in the way of reading. It has led me to regard, with a proper pride, such prodigies, let us say, as my unfaltering slow conquest of each canto of "The Faerie Queene," of some eight volumes of the Shelburne "Essays," of Chaucer's every, most illiterately spelled line (in addition to the Preliminary Essay, the Memoir, the Introduction, and all the footnotes, by the Reverend W. W. Skeat, M.A.), of Milton's "Collected Works," of one whole novel by Ludwig Lewisohn, and of Adelaide Anne Procter's "Legends and Lyrics"—without my having pusillanimously skipped one word in any of these dreadful productions.

Nor does that harrowing list record one-tenth of one per cent of my self-inflicted discomforts. The Drifter's confession, in the second place, has led me to consider that, as go the world's dreary "literary classics," I seem to have read some part of all books, or in any event of all books existent in English, that had any claims to be called important, howsoever many hundreds of them I never happened to finish. I sigh then, making the customary reference to good Cynara; and I return (more or less) to the subject in hand, with sigh number two.

For I estimate roughly that, as one sole result of all this time-wasting, I today remain upon visiting terms, as it were, with a thousand or so volumes, to which I elect now and again to return, as one seeks out a familiar friend, informally and briefly, reading only a page or two, and then putting aside the book with the frankness permissible between old associates. That contents me, as goes the obsolescent practice of reading. And I have no true desire to hobnob with any other authors, whether living or dead.

ERNEST BOYD

Georg Brandes once said of Walter Scott that he was the kind of author every child has read but no adult can read. In dispensing with "indispensable" books, I should apply that principle to almost all works of fiction. The kind of novel that can really entertain an adult man is not, so far as I am concerned, the kind one reads in one's 'teens. As regards non-fiction, the process of elimination is obviously determined by the extent to which one has the courage of one's prejudices. Here is the list. Publius Vergilius Maro: "The Aeneid"; Giovanni Boccaccio: "The Decameron"; Edmund Spenser: "The Faerie Queene"; John Milton: "Paradise Lost"; John Bunyan: "The Pilgrim's Progress"; Alexandre Dumas: "The Three Musketeers"; Victor Hugo: "Les Misérables"; Charles Dickens: "David Copperfield";

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Walt Whitman: "Leaves of Grass"; and Mark Twain: "Huckleberry Finn."

H. L. MENCKEN

My chief apology must be, not for having left too many gaps in my reading, but for having read too much. I have been hard at it since I was ten years old, and for every good book that I have got through I have probably read a hundred bad ones. A few weeks ago I actually read "Pilgrim's Progress" for the second time—an unhappy experience, for it is dreadful nonsense, and, despite the ardors of the pedagogues, mainly badly written. Shortly afterward I had a second bout with Plato's "Apology of Socrates," and came away more convinced than ever that Socrates deserved to die, if not as a corrupter of youth then as a bad lawyer, and that Plato knew it. I have actually read "Paradise Lost," and, what is more, "Paradise Regained." If Milton had written a "Paradise Lost Again" I'd probably have read it too.

Fortunately, I tackled Dante when I was too young to fathom anything save Gustave Doré's illustrations, and God has preserved me from going back to him since. The same circumstance rescued me from George Eliot, who existed in a horrible set of tall, black volumes at home. Later on, for some reason that I can't give, I found "The Brothers Karamazov" impossible, and so I have read no Dostoevski since, though men I venerate say he had the gift. Jane Austen and the Brontës also await the leisure of senility, and so does "The Cloister and the Hearth" and all of Trollope save "Phineas Finn" and another that I forget. I refuse flatly to read "The Faerie Queene," despite the seductions of William Lyon Phelps. Scott sickened me after "Ivanhoe" and I have not been back. Of Cooper I have read nothing save "The American Democrat." I have never read "Mme Bovary," or "Mlle de Maupin," or "Paul and Virginia," or Goethe's "Faust" (I tried twice, once in English and once in German, and had to give up both times).

BURTON RASCOE

When I began my tenure as literary editor of the New York *Tribune* (now the *Herald Tribune*) in 1922, I thought it only fair to my readers to acquaint them with my limitations, my tastes and prejudices in literature and the other arts, in order that my readers would know "just how far they wish to go with me, how much they may take for truth and valid judgment and how much for personal shortcomings, deficiencies, and ignorance." In that act of laying my cards on the table, I gave a list of authors I had not read or had read only in part, as well as a list of authors I particularly cared for.

Among many books I have not read are Westermarck's "Human Marriage," Frazer's "Golden Bough" (except in the abridged edition), the last three volumes of Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," any of Thackeray except "Vanity Fair," Hawthorne's "House of Seven Gables," any of Melville except "Moby Dick" and "Pierre," Zola's "La Terre," any of Trollope, any of Bulwer Lytton, any of Bacon except two or three essays.

I could amplify this list enormously. It is never necessary to read all of any one author to learn the quality of his mind and see what he has to give. Yet there are writers, like Lucian and Robert Burton, for example, that I not only read thoroughly over and over again, regretting that there is not more of them to read, but find new delights in each rereading.

GEORGE JEAN NATHAN

1. Nine-tenths of Sir Walter Scott
2. The plays of Lope de Vega
3. Edgeworth in toto
4. Three-fourths of Macaulay
5. Romain Rolland
6. Three-fourths of Charles Lamb
7. One-half of Chaucer
8. One-half of Thackeray
9. Three-fourths of William Dean Howells
10. Nine-tenths of Pushkin

ELLEN GLASGOW

It is better, I think, to know a few books intimately than to boast of a casual acquaintance with the multitude. Yet my way, I confess, has been the enjoyment of the many. I seem to have read almost everything, and forgotten much, from all that has been translated of the "Upanishads" and the "Mahabharata" to the whole of Jowett's "Plato" (except the "Laws" and a part of one other volume) and the whole of Thomas Taylor's "Plotinus," and so on, obeying the downward curve of unreason, through Spinoza and Schopenhauer and the world of poets, to as much of Defoe as I could find, all of Richardson and Fielding, one novel by Mrs. Radcliffe, and ninety volumes of Anthony Trollope. This is the briefest of outlines. All it proves—for my ignorance is still vast—is that I could never have as many books as I need for my contentment. Since I have never read as a duty, I think of books not as an indispensable part of culture but as an indispensable part of living.

For me, at least, the classics are not dry and dusty. Those I enjoyed as a child, I still enjoy, though not in the same measure. Moreover, I am incapable of the tedious diligence with which Arnold Bennett (he was only twenty-nine!) assembled his masterpieces, as if he were piling stones on a monument to futility. I have read a part of the work of every author he names, though far indeed from the whole of Chaucer, Bacon, Spenser, Dryden, Pope, Johnson, and Carlyle. Of Susan Ferrier, I have read only "Marriage"; of Leigh Hunt, only the essays and the "Autobiography." But I have read many of the other authors completely and more than once. Gibbon I have read twice from cover to cover, and sighed for more. "The Ring and the Book" I have read twice. "War and Peace" I have read twice. To be sure, two of the books on the Drifter's list have escaped me. I have read neither "The Song of Roland" nor the "Novum Organum" as a whole. On the other hand, I have read both "The Symposium" and "Jude the Obscure" many times.

There follows a list of books, once popular or well thought of, which I have not read and cannot, even in the direct necessity, be persuaded to read. Aristophanes: "The Frogs"; Taylor: "Holy Living" and "Holy Dying"; Pope: "The Dunciad"; Rousseau: "Emile"; George Sand: all the novels after reading "Indiana"; Ruskin: "Sesame and Lilies" and "The Crown of Wild Olive"; Ward: "Robert Elsmere"; Wells: "Mr. Britling Sees It Through"; Horn and Lewis: "Trader Horn"; Hemingway: "Death in the Afternoon."

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Relief That Does Not Relieve

By MICHAEL B. SCHELER

THE newspapers often print laudatory accounts of the work of the Home Relief Bureau in New York City, accounts filled with staggering figures of the money spent for rent, electricity, gas, and above all food for the city's hundreds of thousands of destitute families. But rarely is a word printed in our cosmopolitan press about the inefficiency, negligence, and unpardonable delays of the bureau in rendering relief. Here is a typical case, which came to the writer's personal attention and for whose authenticity he is able to vouch.

Mr. S had had no steady employment for two years. He had picked up odd jobs, canvassing for printing firms or selling one item or another from house to house or office to office, and managed somehow to scrape up enough money to exist with his wife and four children, the eldest of whom was twelve. For months the family lived on an inadequate diet which had serious effects on the health of Mr. S. He became much debilitated and during the early part of this year contracted influenza. He was confined in bed nearly three weeks. The disease left him in an extremely weakened condition, and the physician warned him not to undertake any exertion for at least two months. Mr. S still hesitated to apply for relief, but his wife overcame her sense of pride and one morning called at the local relief bureau. After four hours of waiting in line she reached the desk of the clerk who distributed the necessary application blanks. She took the blank home, answered all the questions carefully, and returned it to the bureau the same afternoon. She explained to the clerk her desperate condition and begged him to rush her case through. The clerk appeared to be sympathetic and wrote "urgent" on her application. He assured her that an investigator would come to see her in a day or two without fail. In the meantime, while Mr. S had been ill, his rent had fallen two months in arrears. The landlord threatened him with eviction and a few days later made good his threat by sending Mr. S a dispossess notice. Mr. S promptly took the notice to the office of the relief bureau.

A week passed and no investigator appeared. Still another week went by. By this time Mr. S had received a letter from a marshal in which he was informed that he must vacate his apartment within four days or be evicted. Already enfeebled by influenza, he was on the verge of a nervous collapse. He finally suggested to Mrs. S that she apply to some Democratic club in the neighborhood and try to enlist the aid of some politician who would perhaps consent to intercede for them with the "higher-ups" at the relief bureau. But Mrs. S, being socialistically inclined, had her doubts about the "aid" of politicians. Instead, she decided to stop at the local branch of the Socialist Party, get hold of the secretary, and present her case to him.

On the evening she called at the Socialist Party branch, a regular meeting was in progress. She called the chairman of the meeting to one side and related her experience to him. He promised to take immediate action. The same evening a committee of the local called at Mr. S's home, got all the facts, and informed Mr. and Mrs. S that they happened to be on intimate terms with the assistant superintendent of the local relief bureau, a middle-aged woman who held socialistic views herself and of whom they spoke very highly. They assured Mr. S that they would write this woman at once and that relief would undoubtedly follow.

Two days later an investigator of the relief bureau came to see Mr. S and spent an hour in taking down "facts" once more. He appeared to be very sympathetic and assured Mr. and Mrs. S that he would approve their application and that relief would be granted at once. In the course of the conversation the investigator told Mr. and Mrs. S that the relief bureau did not advance cash to landlords in payment of rent; instead, the bureau issued rent tickets to landlords who agreed to accept them. The landlords then send these tickets to the main office of the Emergency Relief Bureau and receive checks in return after a lapse of two or three weeks. The investigator then suggested that Mr. S ascertain whether his landlord was willing to accept the bureau's ticket. Mr. S went to the landlord, who lived in the same house, and the landlord promptly came up. When the investigator inquired whether he would agree to have his rent paid with a relief ticket, he bluntly answered no. He said that Mr. S already owed him rent for two months, that he had had to spend four dollars for a dispossess notice, and that he could not afford to wait indefinitely for the bureau's check. He was tired of the bureau's methods, and he would rather take in a non-relief tenant. He therefore advised Mr. S to look for another apartment and find a landlord who would accept the bureau's ticket in lieu of the first month's rent. The investigator pleaded with the landlord, but he was adamant.

The next problem was to find another apartment. Mrs. S, and Mr. S also, though he was very weak, began the search for a charitable landlord who would agree to accept a rent ticket. For days both tramped the streets and climbed hundreds of staircases, but their efforts proved fruitless. Every landlord indignantly refused to consider the "ticket proposition." "We have enough old tenants on the ticket basis. No new trouble for us!" "The city wants its taxes on time, all right. Why does it not meet its rent-ticket obligations on time? No tickets for me!" "My dear lady, you know how the city pays on these tickets? Well, let me tell you: once in two months, and often we have to wait longer for our money. Do you expect me to take you in on this basis? Let my apartment stay vacant better!" Such were the answers which Mr. and Mrs. S received.

Mrs. S went to the bureau and presented her new problem. And the answer was in effect: "You must find a landlord. We cannot find one for you. If you find yourself in the street, you cannot blame us for it." "But could you not help me find a landlord or force the old landlord to accept your ticket?" Mrs. S pleaded with them. "No. We cannot dictate terms to any landlord and it is your business to find a new landlord. There are thousands of landlords who accept tickets. Go out and find one." Again Mr. and Mrs. S resumed their thankless task of finding the fabulous

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landlord. A week was consumed in the search, but again their efforts proved fruitless, although they visited the most dilapidated shacks, the poorest slums.

One morning the final notice arrived from the marshal. No more extensions would be granted and the landlord would not consider relief money. "You will be evicted Thursday at 10 a.m." Mrs. S took this letter to the bureau and pleaded for cash for the first month's rent, so that her family could move into a new apartment. "We cannot change our policy for you," came the reply. One clerk volunteered to "help" her, and gave her a few addresses where, he was sure, she would find a landlord who would take her ticket. The addresses proved to be empty hopes. Some of the landlords did have tenants whose rent the bureau paid, but they were old tenants, and the landlords would consider no new ones on the same basis.

The dreaded morning came. A marshal, accompanied by a powerfully built policeman and several expressmen, arrived and ordered the furniture out. No pleas, no tears on the part of Mrs. S helped. Within thirty minutes all the family's earthly possessions were on the sidewalk. The marshal told Mrs. S "confidentially" that now she could positively get cash from the bureau. Braced by this information, Mrs. S ran to the bureau and explained her plight. But again she was told: "Get busy at once and find a landlord today." "But I am in the street," Mrs. S sobbed, "with no roof to shelter my poor, innocent children. How dare you advise me to find a landlord today when I failed to find one in four weeks? Could you not even now advance me cash so that I could move into an apartment today and give my children a home again?" "We are sorry, Madam, but we cannot change our rules for you," said the office chief.

And Mr. and Mrs. S were homeless for five days. Some comrades of the Socialist Party local volunteered to take in a child each. Another comrade, a teacher of the local Workmen's Circle (Arbeiter Ring), offered his classrooms for night shelter to Mr. and Mrs. S and their two-year-old girl. A portable bed was secured, someone offered a few pillows and two blankets, and thus a bedroom was improvised. A friendly candy-store proprietor offered his back room and a gas range to Mr. S and his family for use during the day. A shoemaker, too, offered his meager facilities. And as a result of the untiring efforts of a few women comrades, a sufficient sum was collected to pay the first month's rent of a new apartment.

Once in possession of cash, Mr. S found no trouble in finding an apartment. But the very evening Mr. S moved into his new home, the new landlord came to him and said: "I know all about you, Mr. S. I know where you come from. However, as long as you are not a Communist and as long as you pay your rent, you may stay in my house!" Mr. S learned to his consternation that by means of an underground system landlords keep one another informed of the "character" of their new tenants. Mr. S had become an "outlaw" in the landlords' world.

Another problem soon cropped up. The gas and electricity in the new apartment were shut off. Mrs. S took her electric-light and gas bills to the office of the bureau. She emphasized that gas was vitally essential as she had no coal range on which to warm milk for her baby. She was promised that the gas and electricity would be turned on in two days. A week passed. Several more visits were made to the bureau before the investigator called at Mr. S's home and gave him tickets to cover the last month's gas and electricity bills. Mr. S promptly walked over to the gas company's office, where he was informed to his dismay that the gas would not be turned on unless he paid for one additional month of the bill which was in arrears or induced the bureau to pay it. He was given the same information at the local office of the electric company. Mrs. S once more called at the office of the bureau and wanted to know how long her family was to be tortured. "We are sorry, Madam," she was told, "we do not pay arrears on gas and electricity bills. You will have to raise the money yourself." "But," Mrs. S protested, "we returned four coal tickets to you, we raised the money for our rent. Can you not at least pay our gas and electricity bills in full?" "We have our rules, Madam, and you are not going to change them. Go to the City Hall," another "chief" told her brusquely. Once more Mrs. S had to appeal for help to a comrade in the neighborhood. As a result the gas and electricity were turned on, two weeks after her family moved into the new apartment.

Such is the "relief" that is being handed out to thousands of new applicants. Something should be done to make the Home Relief Bureau a more effective instrument for the relief of the army of the unemployed.

In the Driftway

A LETTER comes to the Drifter from William Geppert, who signs himself also "Great-Grandfather Bill" and has a department for young folks in the White Plains (New York) *Daily Reporter*. "Great-Grandfather Bill" writes from Finney Farm, Croton-on-Hudson, on note paper which bears a ravishing picture in four colors at the top of the page. The picture is of one of those farms one dreams about—not the modern sort, hard up, harried, and covered with mortgages. Finney Farm—so the picture suggests, anyhow—is fat, fruitful, and prosperous. There is a noble two-story house, with red chimneys and blue windows, set in front of a green and black background of trees. Next to the house stands a spacious barn. Four contented cows flank the right of the picture, while at the left a column of white hens—maybe they are sheep—advance in orderly single file upon the barn. No sheriffs or bill collectors are anywhere to be seen. Altogether, unless the artist deceives us, it is a farm which to live on would tempt one to give up being President, or even being the Drifter. Perhaps there is a mistake about the address. Maybe Finney Farm is situated not at Croton-on-Hudson but the Other Side of Paradise.

* * * * *

BUT "Great-Grandfather Bill" does not write of Finney Farm, much as one might like to hear from him about it. He has something else on his mind. He says:

> Notice you do not like spinach. Why not form an anti-spinach club? . . . I can remember back to my early days when it was thought spinach was good for the materialistic stomach, along with sassafras as a tea in the spring, with whiskey and garlic as sedatives for the belly ache. Am now approaching my eightieth birthday, and have distinct

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remembrances not only of my distaste for these awful dispensations but shaken belief in how God could be so mean to us little ones that could not resent all debasements of taste as infringing upon rights bestowed on us by the Constitution guaranteeing us to be legally equal in all respects, regardless of relationship, size, or age. Even now, though admonitions be changed from the big to the little, I resent the spinach belief as I do the political speeches of the day—they are all spinach.

* * * * *

EVERYBODY, of course, lives under a code these days. Even preachers, although excepted by the recovery act, are codifying themselves just the same. *Zion's Herald* prints a "code for the churches" in which there is a paragraph laying down "hours of work for the minister" as follows:

> A Christian minister should spend five hours every morning in quiet prayer and study, and at least two hours every afternoon in vital pastoral work. The only exceptions to this rule should be Sundays, and Mondays or Saturdays. The minister should scrupulously observe these hours, and laymen must understand that there is to be no interference with the program except in cases of extreme urgency.

Almost thou persuadest the Drifter to be a parson. Think of it! Five hours every morning "in quiet prayer and study!" If the Drifter could have even half of that, he would be willing to continue in this vale of tears somewhat indefinitely and leave heaven for the more exacting.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

Was This Telegram Answered?

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

Here is a copy of a telegram sent to President Roosevelt by the Women's Auxiliary of the Progressive Miners of America. The NRA has put Lewis on his feet again but it's not going to feed the miners.

Springfield, Ill., September 16

HON. FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
WHITE HOUSE, WASHINGTON, D. C.

We voice the cry of hungry children whose mothers by thousands are organized into powerful Auxiliary, Progressive Miners of America. We women vigorously condemn coal code for failure to provide way out of misery of unemployment. We brand as hollow mockery government decree of eight-hour day secured by our men through bloodshed thirty-five years ago. We protest promised investigation and conference next January, giving mine owners opportunity to stock low-cost coal to sell at inflation prices. We denounce as a crime against our already impoverished families inevitable sharing of work and poverty under eight-hour day in overdeveloped and highly mechanized industry that should have been placed on six-hour basis demanded years ago by miners. . . .

We denounce Peabody praise of code with prediction of returning peace and full dinner pail in Illinois strike zones, when this infamous Insull corporation and beneficiary of Lewis's union starves little children whose fathers' dinner pails have rusted while American Federation of Labor strike-breakers take jobs under protection of Governor Horner's troops. Through same streets now patrolled by militia, mothers of these children see hogs hauled away to be burned by governmental decree and their families hungering for meat. Is this the New Deal for the coal miners?

With our men, we women face tear gas, machine-guns, and bayonets in terrific struggle for bread and freedom from enslavement of Lewis union. Violence and death have been inflicted upon us, with nine of our men and one of our women murdered. We are cooks, not economists, but we women know that six-hour day with increased wage is step that must be taken to enable our men to provide food for us to cook. Hunger in our kitchens and hatred of Lewis rule have put us women on the march. Neither Mediation Board nor Green and Lewis proclamations can stop revolt of desperate mothers who refuse to see their children starve.

We women solemnly warn the federal government there can be no peace in turbulent coal fields so long as hunger stalks these mining towns and hatred goads more and more miners into open rebellion against repudiated leadership of Lewis.

ILLINOIS WOMEN'S AUXILIARY
PROGRESSIVE MINERS OF AMERICA

Belleville, Ill., September 22 AGNES BURNS WIECK

Another Word on Child Labor

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

It seems to me that Mr. Villard's jubilation over the abolition of child labor through the establishment of codes by the federal government is greater than the facts warrant. Those of us who have favored the abolition of child labor have tried to bring it about by raising the compulsory school age. An end to labor by children in industry was not urged to keep the children in idleness but to give them additional education. But we are now taking children out of the factories without making any provision for additional educational facilities for them. On the contrary, we are getting rid of child labor at a time when the schools are under attack and the school expenditures have been so severely cut that in some localities adequate facilities are not even being provided for children under fourteen.

Furthermore, the children are being taken out of the mills in the greatest numbers in just those places, such as the textile regions of the South, where educational facilities were weakest to start with and have suffered most from the recent cuts in expenditures.

Cambridge, Mass., October 1 ALFRED BAKER LEWIS

Steel Tells All!

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

Under the title, President Swings to Right, the "Windows of Washington" columnist in *Steel* for October 16 observes:

> It is encouraging for business that the President appears to be veering toward "the right," and the underground gossip has it that this swing will become more pronounced since the American Federation of Labor re-elected William Green president and returned home. The "brain trust" is merely a snappy phrase of yesterday, and the bright young men who composed it rarely come around to the White House any more. The President now exposes his mind to such conservatives—comparatively speaking—as Secretary Woodin, Budget Director Douglas, and Professor O. M. W. Sprague, noted financial authority attached to the Treasury.
>
> Henry Bruere, grounded in the conservatism of life insurance and the presidency of the largest savings bank

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in New York, has become the President's official eyes and ears and a sort of domestic Colonel House to check up on the R. F. C., NRA, P. W. A., and other initialed mechanisms devised to combat the depression.

Secretary Cummings has emerged from his obscurity to allay fears raised at the American Bankers' Association convention when an aid observed that if the Constitution conflicted with the NRA or the plans of the recovery program, the Constitution would have to flex. Mr. Cummings has been at some pains to stand by the Constitution and the aid has been returned to private life.

Pittsburg, October 19 FRANK H. RAMSAY

Unemployed—1933 Model

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

My subscription expires September 9, 1933, and as it will be impossible for me to renew I am notifying you, as I haven't had a shift for a long time and things are getting worse. Since this NRA craze has started, they are laying off people in the catering lines instead of putting on more. Every morning I go out "gutter sniping." A year ago there were perhaps four of us making the rounds. Now there are at least forty persons who go from one rubbish can to another. You can see them with all sorts of vehicles—baby buggies, wheelbarrows, kids' express carts. Down at the commission houses they just swarm and scramble for vegetables and fruit. The most pitiful sight is when it starts to get dark and there are few lingerers around the commission row. Then you see men and women who would be ashamed to do it in daylight, slinking around like coyotes, going through the leavings, literally going through slop cans. They don't seem to be as hardened as we are and their clothes are better looking. Instead of carrying a sack as we do, they have handbags and seem to be shocked when they see some one observing them.

I, being a cook and fortunate to have a janitor job of $15 a month, can manage to get by better. I got a room for $8 a month. I fitted it up with furniture made of drygoods boxes; have a one-dollar electric stove and manage to cook on that; but there are four more, all kitchen men, who share what I have. We look like kings to the flop-house patrons. We don't go hungry but if the Russians live worse than we do I feel sorry for them.

And just think of the California climate. That should be enough for anyone. Had I come here a beggar I'd not say a word, but I too was prosperous when I came here some years ago—paid up in my fraternal lodge, belonged to several different workers' clubs, and so on. But now all I can get out of them is duns. The churches don't seem to be much better. Their doors are locked at night. As proof, an item in the paper last week stated that someone crawled through a window and rifled the joint. So you see it will be out of the question for me to raise the price for a renewal. Please cut me off when my time is up as I owe more now than I'll ever be able to pay.

San Diego, August 25 JOHN HAUSS

The Advertisement Once More

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

Clarifying the Straus-Untermyer situation was excellent. But why did the *Times*, the *Herald Tribune*, and the *American* refuse to print the Untermyer advertisement, and why did *The Nation* decline to print at least such reasons for that refusal as were given by the papers in question?

New York, October 23 J. H. TOMPKINS

[The *Times* stated that Mr. Untermyer's advertisement contained the statement, "No self-respecting man or woman of any race or creed will, in my judgment, buy German-made goods or patronize a store where they are sold," and explained that it could not very well run this, a virtual request to people not to trade at Macy's, when at the same time it was continuing to run Macy's advertising. The *Times* further suggested that the advertisement might be libelous. The *Herald Tribune* said that it was not the custom of the paper to allow one advertiser to attack another. The *American* declared that it was the opinion of its attorney that the advertisement was libelous. *The Nation* had no doubts whatever that the advertisement was not libelous, and did not hesitate to print it. Readers are entitled to form their own conclusions as to the relative importance of the various motives of the three morning dailies in not running Mr. Untermyer's advertisement.—EDITORS THE NATION.]

Contributors to This Issue

JUDSON KING is the director of the National Popular Government League.

MICHAEL B. SCHELER is a free-lance writer.

CONSTANCE ROURKE is the author of "American Humor—A Study of the National Character" and "Troupers of the Gold Coast, or the Rise of Lotta Crabtree."

WILLIAM GRUEN contributes articles and reviews on the philosophy of science to various periodicals.

LOUIS M. HACKER, in collaboration with Benjamin B. Kendrick, is the author of "The United States Since 1865."

GERTRUDE DIAMANT contributes reviews to various periodicals.

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Books, Art, Drama

Night by Day

By DWIGHT DURLING

Strange effigy in weightless element
Is one who stalks about you, walks beneath,
Turning with earth upon the wheel of time,
Gargoyle among the shadows. Who is he:
Mummer in dumb show, masked tragedian
Buskined, or satyr-dancer in derision
Of that phantasmal fortitude you walk in?
With two dimensions for a theater,
Behold the moody Moor in pantomime
Soliloquizing, robed in travesty,
Or Milton's demon gelded of that brain,
Prone as the snake of Eden under the sun
And thin with mindless lust of mockery.
Was Adam, unfallen, hero to his shadow?

He measures strides with yours, unsleeping lies
Beside you (guardian genius!) in the night:
The moon looks in at the lattice and he is there.
Twin brother of one womb and private fiend,
Is this the shape of Dissolution walking,
The incubus of specters, drinking time,
Mute in his cowl of darkness, and mankind's
Eternal Usher? What but he remains
Even until the end—and yet beyond,
Beyond the hour you follow him underground
And out of the alien light (with him) forever?

A Far Eastern Homer

All Men Are Brothers (*Shui Hu Chuan*). Translated from the Chinese by Pearl S. Buck. The John Day Company. Two Volumes. $6.50.

TO call this magnificent romance Homeric is not to say very much about it. It is in prose, for instance; it is perhaps twice as long as the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey" combined; and it teems with events of a sort which Homer did not consider suitable to his two-stringed lyre. Nevertheless, the comparison is unavoidable in view of the Chinese author's brilliance and grandeur; and needs only to be supplemented by further comparisons between Lo Kuan Chung—if that is the name of the man who gave "Shui Hu Chuan" its present form—and Rabelais, Cervantes, Fielding, and Dumas, not to speak of the unknown authors of the "Song of Roland" and the Robin Hood cycle. Even then the book would not be described, for it is surely one of the great books of the world, and hence is to be understood first of all in its own terms. It is, I take it, a thoroughly Chinese masterpiece; it recognizes no other universe than that one which seemed to be falling to pieces about seven hundred years ago, toward the end of the Sung dynasty.

It has thirty-six major and seventy-two minor heroes, these being chieftains (in two grades) of a great bandit army which in the thirteenth century occupied a mountain lair in Shantung called Liang Shan P'o. So far as the version goes which Mrs. Buck has selected for translation, this lair remains impregnable by virtue of the many winding waterways that encompass it to the confusion of every imperial army dispatched in its direction. Other versions go on to tell how the robbers finally were conquered and the government made safe. But Mrs. Buck is too sensitive to the excitements of revolution to permit so dreary an anticlimax. Her version ends where it should end—with the bandits at the height of their power and glory, and with a happy China thinkably in the offing. Who would not be for such a revolution, the objective of which is a new government dominated by magnanimous and fascinating heroes like the Opportune Rain Sung Chiang, the Great Intelligence Wu Yung, the Little Whirlwind Ch'ai Chin, and He Whom No Obstacle Can Stay Mu Hung? Who would confess himself a lover of law and order while such men are outside the pale?

The issue is simple and clear. These bandits are the only good men in China, which otherwise is ruled by a corrupt caste whose members "cheat and oppress good people." Officials are "evil and covetous" always—the worst of them, Commander Kao, having "a very small, narrow heart, and he forgets even a great mercy done him, and he remembers every little fault a man may have." What we see, then, is a gradually lengthening procession of heroes bound for the mountain lair. From every Chinese city they come, exiled for crimes of which they have been unjustly—or justly—accused. When it is justly, then the crime was one of passion—an extortioner beheaded, a seducer of young girls beaten to death, an adulterous wife disemboweled. Such sinners are as much on the side of righteousness as are those blameless men like Sung Chiang, the hero of all the heroes, who is merely the victim of intrigue. From here and there they come, singly or in pairs, their paths sometimes crossing at a wine shop, their destination always the mountain fastness where good men are certain of recognition.

There could be no nobler setting for a narrative than this—first all China, and then one mountain top in it where a climax may be wrought. The author seems to have been equally devoted to the two aspects of his scene, and with abundant reason. For the cities and highways of China give him all the material a man could want wherewith to display the variety and reality of a people. Every kind of person seems to be here—soldiers, innkeepers, magistrates, beggars, priests, prostitutes, tradesmen, millionaires, servants, gaolers, prisoners, executioners, peasants, children, old women, doctors, boatmen, fishermen, thieves, fakirs, and saints. Every kind of dwelling is entered, from the palace of a governor to the little curtained house of one who sells rice cakes. And every conceivable happening takes place. Nor is anything extraneous. For everything that happens leads to the lair. There the heroes go, and there in the last quarter of the book the climax is achieved; there is waged the series of wars whereby the robber chiefs make known their inviolability. Thus the author can concentrate upon the second aspect of his scene, giving himself now to the lofty themes of battle and heaven-high boasts and hecatombs after victory. It is as if Zola had become Homer.

A comparison has been suggested with the cycle of Robin Hood, and naturally enough in view of the scruples our heroes have against robbing any but the rich and evil. But the reader must be warned not to expect a merry tale of outlaws in a greenwood. "All Men Are Brothers" is a bloody book; innumerable deaths by violence occur, and many of them are not easy to justify by an appeal to Sung Chiang's principles of Righteousness and Loyalty. There is the killing, for instance, of a four-year-old boy so that his guardian, Chu T'ung, will have to flee and join the chieftains. The Black Whirlwind Li K'uei, himself a chieftain, poisons the child and splits its head open so that justice may go on prevailing at Liang Shan P'o. Robin Hood had no such lieutenant as Li K'uei—nor had Agamemnon, though he had Ajax. It is Li K'uei, for instance, who, after the villainous official Huang Wen Ping's household of

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"forty or fifty people" has been exterminated, is extended the privilege of slicing the live flesh from Huang Wen Ping and broiling it and eating it. "Only then did Li K'uei open the breast and take out the heart and liver, and he took those and made a broth of them for the chieftains to drink when they were drunken." Which reminds me to say that there is a vast quantity of drinking in the book, much of it Gargantuan. Everything is here, in fact, in ultimate degree.

Mrs. Buck's English can scarcely be overpraised. She has performed her gigantic labor with felicity, intelligence, and a never-flagging power, and has added to English literature one of its classic translations.

MARK VAN DOREN

Marvels, a History, and a Character

The Journey of the Flame. Written down by Antonio de Fierro Blanco. Englished by Walter de Steiguer. Houghton Mifflin Company. $3.

DON JUAN OBRIGON was the son of a red-haired Irish king named O'Brien (transiently a common sailor) and of a Spanish girl who lived in a village on the Gulf in Lower California. About thirty years ago, on his one-hundredth birthday—or his one-hundred-and-fourth—he was persuaded to tell an assembled company the story of his youth. This was set down by one who heard it, verified in many details, and somewhat enlarged by the addition of familiar circumstances and legends of the time, though Don Juan, as speaker, remains to the fore. It has now been translated, and will magnetize as many kinds of readers as there were years in Don Juan's dangerous, stormy life.

The book will be seized on of course by any devoted Californian, any ardent native or near-native of the Southwest. Students of Mexican and Indian lore will probably fight for first claim to it, for it contains a deep mine of legends, folk-figures, proverbs, closely woven traditions—enough of these to keep a well-trained folklorist in work for a generation, perhaps for a lifetime, tracing alliances with other lore, following leads to other Mexican and Indian legends. "The Journey of the Flame" will also become provender for historians, since it gives a substantial account of the Spanish missions in the Californias as these appeared about 1810, with talk of the time about Ugarte and Salvatierra, about the unregenerate Indians and Father Serra, whose halo here seems a little awry.

Though only a boy of eleven when he started on the long journey that was to end at Yerba Buena on San Francisco Bay, Juan Colorado was a valued member of the entourage of Don Firmín Sanhudo, viceroy of the King of Spain, who had come to view the missions and to decide whether Spain should hold her American colonies. It was said of the Sanhudos that all the twelve apostles were their cousins or related to them by marriage and that Satan was their half-brother—some said, their left-handed son; so the journey was not lacking in adventure. The Sanhudos went northward by mule train, surrounded by a guard of Mayas, at a time when whaling vessels traded for dried fruit at the missions, when "whales so crowded the bays that it seemed possible to step from one to the other for miles," when turtles, sea otter, seals, cowfish, porpoises crowded the low islands in the lagoons, when pearl fishing was at its height in Juan's beloved Vermilion Sea—the Gulf of California—and a canny boy could fill one pocket with pearls from a leathern bucket in a stone-carved Indian cave. Remembering the bowstring of the Indian guide behind him, he refrained from filling both pockets. There was the gigantic *Almirante* of the pearl fishers to talk to; the caravan was attacked on the journey by Indians; and young Juan with his charge, the boy Inocente of the Sanhudos, was abroad on many a dangerous side-adventure. Juan fought with two knives, and had done a fair amount of blood-letting before the journey began.

Always there were stories—of the Wizard Gopher, of the manta that folded pearl fishers between its wings, the burro-shells that were equally avid, the *ojón,* a fish that demanded courtesy from sailors. None of these tales lost anything by Juan's telling, one would guess; but he was equally accomplished in swift, realistic observation. He could distinguish between the hoof-prints of all the mules in the caravan. "All life is passed upon the earth, and for such as I, all life's actions are recorded on it," he said, not boasting. He was full of cutting conclusions. "Of right and wrong I am not judge, having been born poor." "Honesty to a friend but courtesy to an enemy, until God opens a way for our knives." Skeptical to the inner core, he was full of strange devotions, as to the saint, Sturgo Nacumbin, whose last resting place he sought in the desert under a cruel sun, through thickets of rattlesnakes. He was passionately attached to his native village, and wrote of it with humor and tenderness. His lifelong ardor was for Doña Ysabel de la Cerda Sanhudo, who had been first to trust him.

At times Juan's observations are so salty as to lie on the tongue like brine; his narrative makes most delectable reading none the less. He was called the Flame because of his red hair and qualities allied with it, and he created a closely packed, strange, highly colored story; its final quality lies in its distinguished style—colloquial but as finely edged as the *machete* with the great pearl in the handle which he gave at last to Doña Isabel, "because the two best in this world should not be parted." With all its rich cargo for students this rare autobiography should be firmly appropriated by mere readers.

CONSTANCE ROURKE

The Limitations of Theology

The Limitations of Science. By J. W. N. Sullivan. The Viking Press. $2.75.

READERS of Mr. Sullivan who know his extraordinary talents for popularizing science will regret that in this book he subserves his brilliant exposition of the major aspects of the physical and biological sciences to a commonplace apology for certain theological dogmas. This interjection of religious interpretation is the more unfortunate since without it his book might have offered an effective disclosure of the fact that modern science does not impugn the reality of the non-cognitive phases of experience. Science is what we know of reality; it is not what we experience.

But for Mr. Sullivan science, as knowledge of reality, is inadequate, first, because of certain methodological limitations, and, second, because its content is superficial. The chief value of science is therefore aesthetic. "Toward most of the results of science we are indifferent. Their charm lies in the fact that they illustrate a harmony, but the results, in themselves, are matters of indifference." With what little seriousness Mr. Sullivan takes this view of science as an intellectual arabesque is best shown by his earnest concern to prove that his "religious interpretations" are reconcilable with science. Such an attempt at reconciliation would be utterly pointless did he not recognize that science gives us not merely a harmonious pattern of ideas but also a knowledge of the world we live in. Unaware of these implicit contradictions, he attempts to prove that "there is no essential distinction between the sciences and the arts" by the amazingly trivial arguments that both art and science strive to discover harmonies, and that owing to the lack of training, intelligence, and sensibility in large masses of people, science is

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no more capable of achieving universal agreement than art is of gaining universal appreciation!

In considering Mr. Sullivan's discussion of the inadequacies of science as a knowledge of reality, we must bear in mind that the limitations of science or of any enterprise must be relative to the function which that enterprise is designed to perform. Now the function of science is twofold: it must increase information and it must organize that information into deductive systems. To say that science is limited may therefore mean either that there is a knowledge which is forever unattainable by science or that some of the knowledge discoverable by science is so unique that it cannot be logically connected with the general body of science. The first type of limitation implies some non-scientific method of acquiring knowledge. But instead of explicitly discussing this method, Mr. Sullivan tells us that the new outlook of science "leaves us more free to attach the traditional significance to our aesthetic, religious, or compendiously mystic experiences. It does not actively reinforce any particular religious interpretation of the universe, but it cuts the ground from under those arguments which were held to prove that any such interpretation is necessarily illusory." In support of this conclusion Mr. Sullivan notes that science can give us only a knowledge of the structure of things, and that the objects and principles of science do not constitute all of reality; therefore there must be a knowledge which is not scientific.

We would gladly ignore this elementary logical fallacy if we could find some illumination of the problem in the account of this non-scientific knowledge which the new scientific outlook is supposed to make possible. But all we can learn is that it is possible to have not only a knowledge of the structure but also a "knowledge of the nature" of things, by which—as far as one can gather from an obscure statement—Mr. Sullivan means the perception and enjoyment of qualities. The mystery of how these perceptions serve as the foundation for knowledge in the form of religious interpretations is deeply buried in such remarks as that "our religious impulses cannot be satisfied with anything less than a belief that life has a transcendental significance. And it is precisely this belief that the old philosophy of science made impossible." From various passages in the book one infers that this "transcendental significance" is intimately associated with creation, divine purpose, and free will, but the only argument advanced to prove that these theological doctrines are knowledge of reality and not pure myths is the flimsy fact that they are logically consistent with modern science.

The second type of limitation of science mentioned above might arise from the absence of that universal connectedness of phenomena whose assumption has been one of the most fruitful postulates of science since Newton. In this connection Mr. Sullivan cites Heisenberg's principle that the determination of both the position and velocity of an electron is impossible. It is not quite correct to conclude from this—as Mr. Sullivan does—that causality in the case of individual electrons is meaningless. Heisenberg himself has pointed out that this conclusion follows only if we retain the space and time description of phenomena. Still, it is evident that our concepts of physical laws or physical existence must here undergo radical revision. Whatever form this revision will ultimately take, there can be no justification for the confusion of the objective indeterminacy of electronic motion with subjective intuitions of freedom, as when Mr. Sullivan writes, "It will make it easier to believe that our intuition of free will is not an illusion." The best that theology can hope for is that science might discover that the will is the indeterminate motion of individual electrons capable of causing macrocosmic effects. It is difficult to see what theology would gain by this, or what "inspirational appeal" Mr. Sullivan can find in the theory that the phenomenon we call volition has no determinate cause but is simply the haphazard and arbitrary movement of chance electrons.

WILLIAM GRUEN

Every Man His Own Novelist

It Was the Nightingale. By Ford Madox Ford. J. P. Lippincott Company. $3.

IN a further instalment of his autobiography Ford Madox Ford carries on the narrative of "Return to Yesterday" from the time when he left the British army early in 1919 to the cataclysm of 1929. His method is unlike that of most autobiographers. "I have tried then to write a novel drawing my material from my own literary age." He tells a good deal about the people whom he had to deal with during this decade of his adventures, and he throws in a good many commentarial asides, but he is the hero of his novel. Being that, he has permitted himself liberties with his career, at least as others have observed it. Certain of the persons most closely associated with him are not even mentioned. Because he writes as much as a novelist as an autobiographer, he can perhaps not be consulted too confidently by those students of the age who may want to find in his book solid items of information. His value lies in the agreeable light he casts on the men and women he has chosen to include and the amusing stories he has skilfully told about them. Although his book will be read, it will have to be read as collateral to systematic literary histories of the decade.

Minute accuracy in the circumstances can hardly be called for. If Mr. Ford puts Loew's Theater at the corner of Sheridan Square and Sixth Avenue; if he talks about Reading Ridge, Connecticut; if he appears to remember meeting Ben Hecht, already a renowned writer, in London in 1919; if he misquotes Shakespeare on his title-page: these minor slips are no great matter. As Mr. Ford says: "The first thing you have to consider when writing a novel is your story, then your story—and then your story!" It is more important to make the whole narrative lifelike than to bother too pedantically about details. Mr. Ford must be consulted for general bearings rather than for specific points, even in his authentic record of the rise and fall of the *transatlantic review*.

What distinguishes Mr. Ford from most living writers is his devotion to art and in particular to the art of literature. "I took as the basis of all my conversations two axioms: the first was that the artist—the man who added to the thought and emotions of mankind, and he alone—had any divine right to existence. The rest of humanity was merely the stuff to fill graveyards. . . . I said that my second axiom was that it was only by its arts that a nation could be saved—even commercially." "I believed that humanity can only be brought to ameliorate itself if life as it is is presented in terms of an art. And the business of Art is not to elevate humanity but to render." Mr. Ford does not often go to the bases of his doctrine. He assumes that art works in accordance with its own laws and that life adapts itself to art when life is wise or not when life is foolish. But with his doctrine firmly held, whatever its rationale, he has never faltered for a moment.

Art has been his religion, his philosophy, his patriotism, his love, and his friendship. "I never had much sense of nationality. Wherever there were creative thinkers was my country." "I live in France where the Arts are held in great honor and as often as I can I go to the United States where the greatest curiosity as to the Arts is displayed." Nor has Mr. Ford been self-centered in his devotion to the arts, particularly of literature. He has lived without envy and has greeted with almost incredible hospitality every form of talent as soon as it has revealed itself. There is even the possibility that he may be remembered longer for his services as editor of the *English Review* and of the *transatlantic review* than for any of his original work. And it is equally possible that if Mr. Ford could be aware of this he would face the prospect without distress or

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chagrin. He has loved literature so much that he can rejoice in its prosperity, whatever his own part in it.

CARL VAN DOREN

Middle Western Exquisite

John Hay: From Poetry to Politics. By Tyler Dennett. Dodd, Mead and Company. $5.

IN 1886, when he was forty-eight years old, John Hay shook the dust of Cleveland from his feet and moved to Washington—to live, he assumed, in private elegance for the rest of his life. The next eleven years did slip by indifferently: he watched the world go by from behind the high windows of the Romanesque chateau Richardson had built for him on Lafayette Square; spun out the long hours chatting with his neighbor Henry Adams, who gave the rolling stone of Hay's mind an even smoother polish, so that it came to reflect more and more his, Adams's, image; because he was bored, fled to England only too often to seek out the company of those rising Tories Joseph Chamberlain, George Curzon, and Arthur Balfour. Through these eleven years, which marked a critical period in the development of capitalism both in the United States and abroad, Hay moved like a ghost, apparently learning and seeing nothing and leaving no impress; yet these were the years of preparation at whose conclusion he emerged as the American Ambassador to the Court of St. James's, and seventeen months later as Secretary of State of the United States. It is one of the most puzzling minor records in the whole of recent American history.

The earlier years of John Hay had been equally strange. One generation removed from pioneering stock, Hay had been the son of an impecunious Middle Western village doctor and had been able to go East to attend Brown College only through the generosity of an uncle. He had come back to the rough Illinois river town of his boyhood—the Illinois of Lincoln and Douglas and the acrimonious slavery debate—that incongruous thing, an exquisite: his head stuffed with poetry and the pale moonings of lesser New England transcendentalists. But John Hay had had luck as well as a pleasant face and charming manner, so that Lincoln had taken him to Washington in 1861 presumably in the capacity of a secretary but actually to act as a sort of buffer between the Lincoln household and the unknown terrors of the Washington social world.

The Civil War period had been very much of a lark for Hay; he had come through it with a colonelcy, a host of smart friends, cultivated tastes—but no occupation or prospects. For the next nine years he wandered unhappily between two continents. He tried to return to his uncle's roof and a possible career in Illinois politics: wisely his uncle saw that there was no room for him in that rough-and-tumble world. He scrambled for the crumbs that dropped from the State Department table: there were only legation secretaryships at Paris, Vienna, or Madrid for a nobody without powerful, local political backing. He wrote editorials for the New York *Tribune*, a volume of travel sketches, a book of ballads, some short stories and articles; literature was a sterner taskmistress than this clever man, no longer young, was willing to serve. His sensibilities were too fine for the stuffings at the trough of high bourgeois enterprise: he did not have the capacity for self-deception of the professional politician, nor was he capable of the self-discipline of the authentic artist. In 1874, frustrated at every turn, Hay married the daughter of Amasa Stone, a Middle Western railroad builder and capitalist, and settled down in Cleveland to watch his father-in-law's investments.

In 1883 Hay paid off that debt by publishing anonymously his novel "The Bread-Winners," as mean and unwarranted an attack on organized labor as is to be found anywhere in modern letters; in 1886 he justified his wife's confidence in him by beginning the serial publication of his and Nicolay's monumental biography of Abraham Lincoln. Then empty, undignified, corroding idleness for eleven years. In 1896, possibly impelled by the desire to give his daughters a real social season in a foreign capital, Hay went after an ambassadorship by helping McKinley out of the financial hole he found himself in and by contributing generously to the Republican Presidential campaign chest. He got the London embassy as his reward. Why McKinley made Hay Secretary of State heaven only knows, except possibly that the small-town Ohioan was impressed by Hay's worldliness and his smooth oratory.

Mr. Dennett, who has recounted the story of these preparatory years of John Hay with a sensitiveness rare in American political biographical writing, would have us believe that in the seven years of Hay's secretaryship this soft amateur at living at last found himself and performed yeoman deeds in the interests of American affairs overseas. His long stewardship, Mr. Dennett holds, was one succession of triumphs, and even when Roosevelt shouldered Hay out of the limelight, American foreign policies had already been so well defined that it "remained for the Roosevelt Administration only to apply the accepted principles" as laid down before by Hay. These judgments are so astounding that one can attribute them only to the author's own service in the State Department and his loyalty to the traditions of the diplomatic craft. Hay as Secretary of State was no bigger than Hay the defeated poet and vindictive novel writer hiding behind the skirts of anonymity: what successes he scored were won easily—and the one great mistake he made will yet involve the world in a sanguinary war.

Hay's victories—the securing of an unbroken Alaskan coastline, of the right by treaty for the United States to build and defend the Panama Canal, of England's recognition of American primacy in the Caribbean—were no victories at all in the sense that they were wrested from a stubborn foe. England, encountering suspicion and hostility everywhere and already feeling the challenge of German imperialist rivalry, made these free offerings in an effort to gain at least popular American sympathy for English imperial aspirations.

It will be the Open Door circular of September 6, 1899, however, which will always remain the great monument to Hay's ignorance of world affairs and the economic society in which he lived. Too long did he hide himself behind the curtains of his Washington house. Believing that the Powers had in mind the physical partition of the Manchu Empire and that it was only their intention to exclude American traders from the Chinese ports and the interior cities—in short, failing to see that the spheres of influence were not mercantilistic but imperialistic devices—Hay demanded, and in effect obtained, the preservation of the territorial integrity of China and equal *commercial* rights for American nationals in that country. Had he been aware of the real significance of the presence of the Powers—that they were seeking outlets for surplus capital instead of trading monopolies—the capitalistic advance into the Far East, except by common action, might have been checked then and there and Japan's growth nipped in the bud. Today the United States and Japan stand at the crossroads because the Japanese, thanks to the early start Hay himself gave them, dominate China, while American bankers and industrialists must yet obtain a foothold in the only real market left to imperialism.

Mr. Dennett's claim that Hay blazed the trail for all of Roosevelt's further adventures in *Realpolitik* is an idle one. Surely Hay did not contribute a single thought to the shaping of the Roosevelt corollary of the Monroe Doctrine which established our hegemony over Latin America, or to the intervention in the Russo-Japanese War, which was done to prevent Russia's defeat and maintain the balance of power in the Pacific.

Hay, in his belated maturity and by his sudden elevation

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to a high post, had an unexampled opportunity to do the class he represented a great service and prolong its life a little while longer: but because he was unprepared for this, as he had been for most of life's encounters, his career must remain—to this reviewer, at any rate—one of the lesser tragedies of America's Gilded Age.

LOUIS M. HACKER

Attitudes Toward Confusion

The Woods Colt. By Thames Williamson. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.

From an Ozark Holler. By Vance Randolph. The Vanguard Press. $2.

Dark Moon of March. By Emmett Gowen. The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.

Requiem. By A. E. Fisher. The John Day Company. $2.50.

Cash Item. By Catherine Brody. Longmans, Green and Company. $2.

WRITING in the *Hound and Horn,* Donald Davidson defines the regional movement as "a correction of too much Leviathanism in the arts," a flight from the confusion of urban life into the particular and humanistic. The five books here considered range themselves around this focal point of flight from confusion or a coming to grips with it. The three regional novels, "The Woods Colt," "From an Ozark Holler," and "Dark Moon of March," are dialect stories of the Southern mountains, written in a spirit of allegiance to a locality and its traditions. "Cash Item" and "Requiem," on the other hand, run head on into the confusion of urban life.

The regional novels are disappointing. In the figure of Clint Morgan, who runs afoul of his community and becomes an outcast, Thames Williamson has the makings of a modern hero; but he has told his story too objectively, and the reader never becomes involved in the long tale of Clint's misfortunes. The literal rendering of dialect—and in this novel even the narrator speaks the dialect—is to be questioned. Quaintness is the curse that must be exorcised here; and perhaps an adaptation of the Ozark speech, an understatement that conveys its informing rhythm and poetry, might represent it more accurately to us than direct transcription. In spite of its tragic theme, "The Woods Colt" reads like a mountain idyl. "Dark Moon of March" contains more comment on the part of the author and more characterization; but this story too is veiled in an idyllic glow, while the thumb-nail sketches of Ozark mountain folk in Vance Randolph's novel tend back toward the local-colorism of the seventies. These Southern stories represent only the negative side of the regional movement, in that they deal with dialect and folk-ways as ends in themselves. One wonders whether these writers can continue to set forth pictures of a life that is static and idyllic, that offers no challenge to the constructive powers of the writer, or whether they will have to refresh their original impulse by making the discovery that confusion is latent even within their own traditions.

Of the two novels that come to grips with confusion, "Requiem" is the more powerful. This story of one week in the life of an American family epitomizes all the conflicts that are disintegrating middle-class life under the depression. Except for the oldest son, who has the stoicism necessary to survival, each character experiences a martyrdom: the mother grimly holding on to her ideals of middle-class respectability; the father who leaves home because he is useless surplus there, and comes to a lonely death in the country; the daughter who discovers the difference between the movie versions of romance and her own shoddy affair with the local barber. The heroism of Al, the son, is a mixture of sang-froid and a realistic understanding of things. Unemotional, without middle-class illusions, but with a sort of tactile sense of the immediate justice of a situation, he brings a certain amount of order into the wreckage of family life; and the implication of creating such a hero is that survival is not possible while the ideals of the past hamper those who are struggling through the present transition. Throughout the story irony is created by juxtaposing a glorified picture of American life, as set forth by the radio and the newspapers, with the reality of what is happening. The radio pours forth its saccharine banalities as accompaniment to the family dissensions; and even in their moments of tragedy this American family is so newspaper ridden that the headlines, insane and irrelevant, furnish a constant chorus to their emotions. Mr. Fisher uses the trick effectively, and reveals a strong talent. "Cash Item," more sentimental in treatment, emphasizes the importance of money in our scheme of society through the story of two young lovers who work in a bank and become involved in an embezzlement.

GERTRUDE DIAMANT

Art

Orozco at Dartmouth College

DARTMOUTH COLLEGE is learning a valuable lesson in applied aesthetics. The huge mural fresco which Orozco has been painting on the walls of Dartmouth's new Baker Library during the past year has sent freshets of healthy controversy rippling over this piece of collegiate soil. "Should a mural be two- or three-dimensional? decorative or integral?" "How does a mural differ in formal construction from an easel painting?" From the first seminal dabs of color, Orozco's work has been followed with the keenest interest. Especially among the students the mural has struck a rich, responsive chord. It is saying something to their feelings which their understanding is challenged to decipher, something vital, human, perhaps prophetic.

Wholly apart, however, from its usefulness as a pedagogical instrument, Orozco's mural exists as a work of art—one which we are inclined to regard, judging from the completed portions, as the most important contemporary document of its kind; as important for what it says as for the way it says it. Though it seeks to identify itself with Dartmouth College through certain incidental phrases in its thematic vocabulary, it speaks no local language. By the largeness of its theme, "the evolution of civilized man in America," by the selection of representational episodes, and by the plastic emphasis which these episodes are given in the body of the mural, Orozco secures the widest possible social relevance for his work.

Orozco is aware that a mural, to maintain its ideological validity for the generations to come, must deal with timeless, not temporal, aspects of human society. In other words, a muralist's technical equipment, essential as this may be, will not take him very far unless he has a broad social vision, the ability to relate man to mankind. To pictorialize human events from the point of view of a reporter for a tabloid newspaper, as Benton has done, is journalism, not art. No mural conceived in these transient terms is worth its keep. A painter may take a sour or a sanguine view of human affairs; but if he decides to make human material a conceptual component of his art, he must expect to be condemned if the fabric of his thinking is puerile. Orozco succeeds where Benton fails because he creates an aesthetic as well as a social cosmos from the chaos of our twentieth-century world.

Orozco's Dartmouth mural is divided, both thematically and architecturally, into two parts: the first, consisting of nine panels, two separate, the others integrated on a single long wall,

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interprets the contribution of the Central American red man to American civilization through the Toltecs and the more militant Aztecs who absorbed them; the second part is devoted to the white man's contribution to the New World from conquistadorian times to the present. These two giant segments, each about 1,500 square feet in area, are firmly welded into a pictorial unit by an effective dramatic pattern. By contrasting the two elemental forces—the one blind, the other reasoning—that operate within all human societies, each seeking to dominate and displace the other, Orozco crystallizes the universal struggle-drama of civilization, a conflict waged among all races of men, red, yellow, black, or white.

Structurally, the mural has been handled with the most amazing virtuosity. We must remember that the muralist, unlike the poet or the musical composer, is not free to choose the forms in which he works; he has them thrust upon him. The size and shape of the surfaces to be painted, the dimensions of the spatial area the walls inclose—these are ineluctable facts. How the muralist resolves them reveals his ability, or inability, to think architecturally. Orozco echoes, wherever possible, the dominant proportions of the interior architecture: the verticality of the two separate panels of the first part is accentuated in the Migration Panel by the naked phalanxed bodies of marching Aztecs; in the second, or Human Sacrifice Panel, by its sharply defined triangular construction. Where the dominant lines are horizontal, as in the long wall, Orozco emphasizes them by giving an immense width to the frontal plane, as, for example, in the double panel in which Quetzalcoatl, culture hero and mythical Moses of the Toltecs, rises like an apparition above the pyramids of Teotihuacan.

The second part is still in the making and will be for several months to come. This much, however, can and should be said of the completed unit: formally, as a work of art, and humanly, as a social critique, there is nothing comparable to it. By making concrete our experience as men and as nations of men in the most direct and forceful of creative idioms, Orozco's mural serves to make us constructively critical of the healthy or maleficent aspects of our constantly accruing heritage. Orozco has gone a long way toward resurrecting the mural from the degraded role it has played since the Renaissance.

E. M. Benson

Films

Mae West and the Classic Tradition

One of the charges raised against this column is that it is too little concerned with the actor and the actor's art as it is manifested on the screen. Surely, it is urged, the profiles of the Barrymores, the enigmatic *langueurs* of the Garbos, the lush vitalities of the Dresslers and the Wallace Beerys constitute one of the major appeals of the new medium. Some would even go farther and declare that these constitute the only appeal that such an unfledged art can make to intelligent people. For these people the film is a vehicle for the exploitation of personality and little else; its pretentions to being a mature and complex art are implicitly dismissed as absurd. What they seem to admire and look for on the screen is something most frequently referred to as gusto—crude, animal gusto, which is all too likely a reflection on themselves and their friends. For it is undoubtedly "personality," in the grosser, more physical sense, that explains much of the popularity of such players as the late Louis Wolheim, the late Ernest Tor-

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rence, Emil Jannings, and Charles Laughton. Going to the movies becomes a cheap substitute for a trip to Harlem or an after-dinner party at the prize ring. In a word, it becomes another form of vitality-slumming. Now it must be observed, first of all, that such an attitude is hardly distinguishable from the attitude that dominates the lowest order of film-goers. For this reason alone this column has refrained as much as possible from discussion of actors and their personalities: the "fan" magazines, devoted to the soul-states, the diet, and the moral hygiene of the stars, do this much more entertainingly. But there is another and more important reason for reticence on these matters. A picture in which the acting provides the sole interest can only be considered, as far as this column is concerned, a bad picture. In this conviction it is in agreement with pretty nearly everyone who takes the screen with any degree of seriousness—especially with directors like Eisenstein, Pabst, and Clair, who reduce, or tend to reduce, the hegemony of this one element among the many elements that constitute the complex art of the cinema. Perhaps one can have too little to say about acting, but the trouble at present seems to be that one says too much; and if one emphasizes other elements to its neglect it is only in the hope of establishing a better balance.

These remarks are to a large extent suggested by Miss Mae West's latest raree-show, "I'm No Angel," now in its third week at the Paramount. As a piece of cinema this entertainment has even less interest than Miss West's first starring vehicle. But that it has interest and a great deal of interest, although of an oblique and rather intellectual nature, cannot be denied. It is another astonishing example of the phenomenon of personality in the theater. From the moment that Miss West issues from her tent as Nira, the hula-hula dancer, to the fantastic courtroom scenes at the end, we are completely subjugated by personality. Miss West's acting style is at once both traditional and burlesque. Unfortunately, there is a certain confusion possible here because one means both that Miss West's style is in the tradition of American burlesque, or "burleycue," and that it is a burlesque of that tradition. Whatever one may think of that tradition, it must be granted that Miss West has brought it to its classic culmination. One may use such a word as classic because of the extreme objectivity with which Miss West both recognizes and employs her materials. So perfectly does she now sum up in her own person—her speech, gestures, and carriage—the main elements of her tradition that she no longer requires a story or even a backdrop. She would be effective on a bare concert stage. The second point that one wishes to make about Miss West's acting is intended to be also something like an explanation of her vogue among people who must find some excuse for enjoying her crudeness, vulgarity, and irrepressible gusto. The reason that these people can appreciate her with such safety is to be found in her own special care to make them feel that this is after all something just put on, a broad joke, a burlesque of burlesque. By a tone of voice or an expression of the eyes, Miss West makes everything seem all right. And by thus making possible an intellectual defense for its perhaps unconscious response to her very real and great energies she enables her audience to save its face.

"The Wandering Jew" (Cameo) is the first of the many anti-Hitler pictures that we are promised this season. Admirably acted by Jacob Ben-Ami in the role of a Jewish artist in Germany who is made to feel the age-old persecutions of the race, the film as a whole suffers from being too hastily put together for the purposes of immediate propaganda.

WILLIAM TROY

Next week: *Walter Pach will discuss the most important art openings of the fall.*

Drama

Three Good Plays

MANY years ago I heard my predecessor in this department introduced to an audience as "the man who keeps the readers of *The Nation* in a state of depression concerning the theater." The remark contained just that grain of truth requisite for wit, and there have been times when it seemed to me that I was, in this respect at least, carrying on our tradition in adequate fashion. Recently I have been positively embarrassed by the steady stream of eulogy which has flowed from my typewriter, and I have longed for something of which I could disapprove with satisfying thoroughness. I hardly hope that my readers will believe the general level of theatrical entertainment this season to be as high as it actually is, and I feel, therefore, called upon to defend myself against the possible charge that I suffer from an insidious form of creeping benevolence. The simple truth is, however, that never in my nine years of professional theatergoing have I known a time when so large a proportion of the plays furnished, at the very least, an interesting and entertaining evening. To make matters worse I am now obliged to report three more productions—"Let 'em Eat Cake," "Her Master's Voice," and "The Green Bay Tree"—of which the first two are highly diverting and the third so absorbing as to take its place alongside "Men in White" as a play too good to be missed by anyone who cares for what the contemporary drama has to offer.

This last, directed by Jed Harris and presented by him at the Cort Theater, is the work of an Englishman named Mordaunt Shairp whose talent is individual enough to make his name worth remembering. Primarily a brilliant psychological study of a somewhat abnormal character, it has more than enough of action and movement to satisfy those who demand a good deal of both, but it is chiefly remarkable for its success in drawing an unfamiliar portrait with a fulness, a delicacy, and a power which one seldom finds outside the pages of a first-rate modern novel. Moreover, the subject of this portrait—an extremely cultivated hedonist who is at once relentless and effeminate—is a type of which two striking things may be said: first, that it has seldom, if ever, been adequately portrayed on the stage; and, second, that anyone moderately acquainted in the world will nevertheless recognize here the full development of certain traits and tendencies which he has observed for himself without ever having realized those implications and interrelations now made clear in an astonishingly well-integrated portrait.

Of how many characters which one meets in new novels or plays can it be said, as of this Mr. Dulcimer it can, that we are given the sense of new insight into an unfamiliar corner of human nature? From the very moment he steps upon the stage to give directions for the decoration of his dining-room he captures the attention, and never for an instant does he cease to be the center of a fascinated interest. Something—perhaps a good deal—must be credited to the vivid playing of James Dale, but his performance is made possible only by a text which manages with extraordinary skill to define the character of a man whose various weaknesses and vices are so built up into a consistent whole that their sum total comes to equal a kind of greatness. One is reminded remotely of Proust's M. Charlus, with his somewhat similar combination of cruelty, cultivation, and perversity. Whatever this Dulcimer was, he was that consciously and with intention. He knew himself and to that self he was true. One begins by smiling at the ritualistic solemnity with which he arranges the flowers, but one ends a little ter-

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rified by the iron will of a man who has so mastered himself and others that he has created a trivial, luxurious world precisely suited to his own abnormal but exacting needs. Of such stuff, of such an egotism plus such perversely delicate sensibilities, are Neros made. And whatever of horror or revulsion the spectator may feel as the character is unfolded, he cannot choose but hear. On the other side I feel bound to add that I think the play should have ended when the young protégé of Dulcimer recognizes his inability to break away from the influence of the older man. The death of the central character is not inherently unconvincing but simply not involved in the otherwise logical inevitability of events, and I do not see that anything is gained by the attempt to make doubly clear the already evident fact that his heir is hopelessly enslaved. This, however, is a minor point. The important fact is that "The Green Bay Tree" is not only an absorbing play but one which gives the spectator a renewed respect for the drama as a vehicle for profound and absorbing psychological portraiture.

It must be over a decade ago that Clare Kummer was very well known as the author of a series of gentle but slightly delirious farce-comedies, among which were "A Successful Calamity" and "Rollo's Wild Oat." One does not usually remember mere bits of fluff quite so long as that, and one infers that they must have been marked by a distinct individuality of their own. Now Miss Kummer has suddenly broken a long silence with "Her Master's Voice" (Plymouth Theater), a farce marked by exactly the same comic obliquity of vision, the same fresh but gentle wit which made her earlier pieces unique. She is—dangerous word—whimsical without being sentimental and shrewd without being cynical. Anyone, therefore, who desires an evening of amusement almost miraculously unmarred by a single cliché could hardly do better than to see Roland Young, Laura Hope Crews, and Frances Fuller disporting themselves charmingly in "Her Master's Voice."

As for "Let 'em Eat Cake" (Imperial Theater), several hundred people are probably at this moment debating whether or not it is as good as or better than its predecessor, "Of Thee I Sing." I shall not take sides but content myself with reporting that these further adventures of Wintergreen and Throttlebottom are vastly amusing during many moments even if they are also occasionally dull. The music seems to me better than in the previous instalment of this epic and the general smartness beyond criticism. I must, however, add that the purely perfunctory and farcical ending of the whole is a bit disappointing. Obviously the authors wanted to avoid either the suspicion of propaganda or the impression that their satire was as savagely nihilistic as, at moments, it seems. They have, however, allowed themselves to go so far in some of the scenes, and so clearly implied so deep a scorn for conservative and radical alike, that the trifling conclusion seems almost an evasion of the issues they themselves have raised.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

"Three and One" (Longacre Theater) is a French farce which revolves about the delicately posed and hilariously resolved problem of whether an extremely delectable young lady will choose the Poetic, the Practical, or the frankly Physical mong three young men—the variously sired sons of a famous dancer who has found three men in her life of whom she wanted to "keep a copy." Lilian Bond is more than adequate as the desirable young lady, and the piece is well acted throughout.

M. M.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH says

AH, WILDERNESS. Guild Theater. Delightful sentimental comedy of Youth, written by Eugene O'Neill, although it doesn't seem to have been.

AS THOUSANDS CHEER. Music Box. Hard-hitting musical satire of current events, with Clifton Webb, Helen Broderick, and Leslie Adams. Best thing of its kind.

CHAMPAGNE, SEC. Morosco Theater. Lively and charming operetta based on "Die Fledermaus."

DOUBLE DOOR. Ritz Theater. An exciting melodrama obviously suggested by the Wendell case.

LET 'EM EAT CAKE. Imperial Theater. A worthy successor to Of Thee I Sing.

MEN IN WHITE. Broadhurst Theater. Extraordinary production of an extraordinary play.

PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS. Avon Theater. Entertaining comedy about bundling and other lighter sides of life in old New England.

THE GREEN BAY TREE. Cort Theater. Reviewed in this issue.

THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS. Empire Theater. Moliere made gay and delightful through a very sprightly translation.

THREE AND ONE. Longacre Theater. Reviewed in this issue.

THUNDER ON THE LEFT. Maxine Elliot Theater. To be reviewed next week.

LECTURES

THE EIGHTH FINE ART
(Swinging Luminous Forms Through Infinite Space) will be the subject matter of a series of 6 lectures by
THOMAS WILFRED
Beginning Wednesday Nov. 15, 8 P.M. illustrated with the
NEW CLAVILUX (color organ)
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The Art Institute of Light
(first of its kind in the world)
Grand Central Palace, 480 Lexington Avenue
First course of its kind ever given.
Write for information.

LECTURES

SCOTT NEARING
will start a course on
CURRENT EVENTS
Friday, Nov. 10, at 7 P.M.
at the INSTITUTE FORUM
17 Irving Place — Adm. 25c
and he will lecture
Thurs. November 9, at 8:30 P.M.
"Manchuria, a War of Conquest"
at 103rd St. and Riverside Dr.
ALFRED ADLER
will lecture Nov. 14, at 8:45 P.M.
on "Criminals and Criminal Minds"
at the
Institute for Advanced Education
Riverside Drive and 103d St. CLarkson 2-1700
Admission - - - - - Fifty Cents

LECTURES — FORUM

New Masses and Film-Photo League Present:
SPRING (American Premiere)
The Man with the Movie Camera
Inaugurating a movie and lecture series on
HISTORY OF THE SOVIET FILM
New School for Social Research, 66 West 12th St.
Saturday, November 18, 7:15 and 9:30 P.M.
Single admission 50c Series ticket (5) $1.50
Get tickets from the New Masses, 31 E. 27th St.

FORUM
The Society for the Advancement of Judaism
15 W. 86th St., N. Y.
Sunday morning, Nov. 5, 10:45 A.M.
PROF. ALFONS GOLDSCHMIDT
formerly of Univ. of Leipsig, now Professor of the University in Exile,
will speak on
"The New Germany: Where Will It Lead?"
Musical program All are welcome

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